

# STATE

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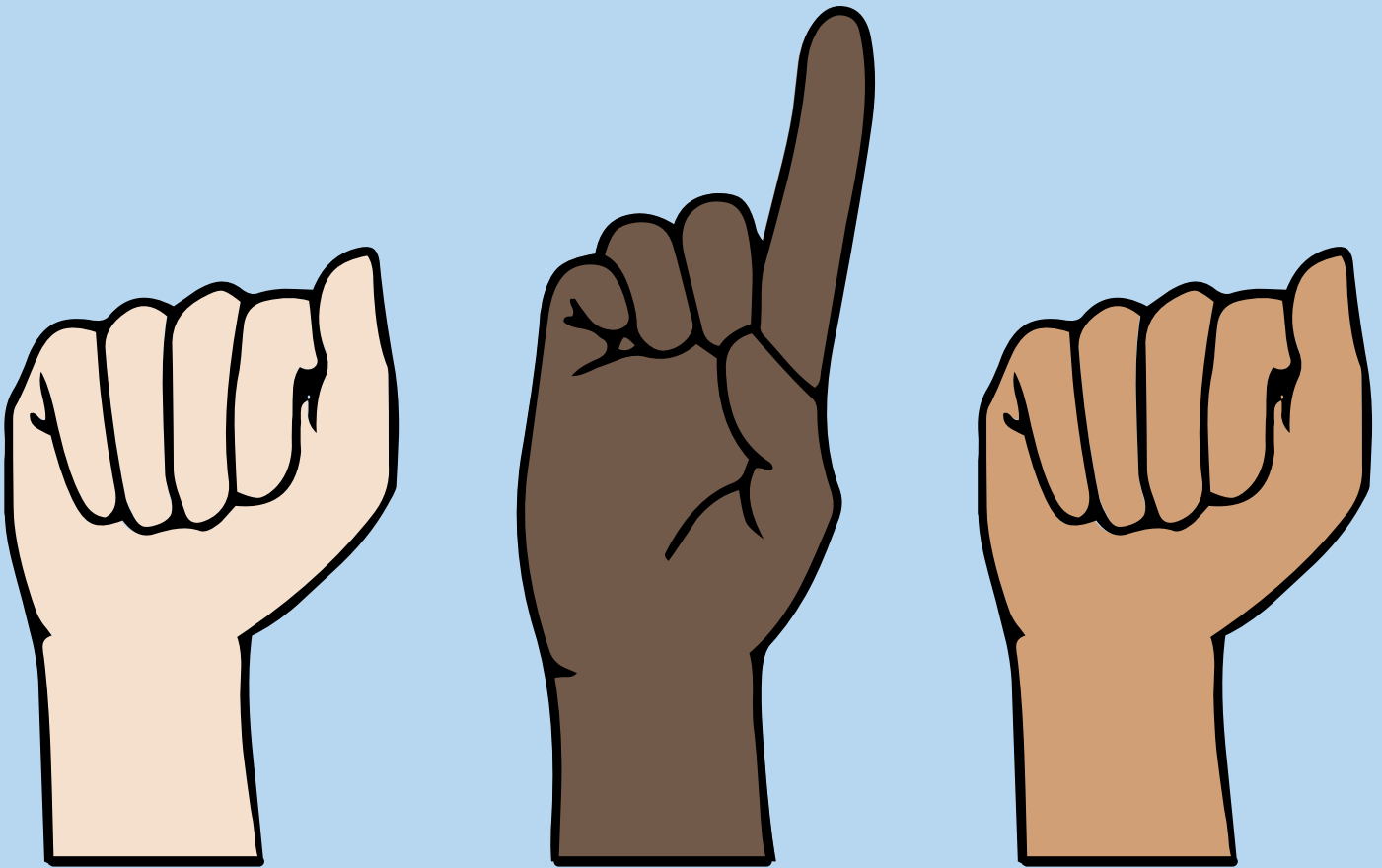
# MAGAZINE

## Fighting Hunger

S/GFS helps ensure access  
to food around the world

## Arctic Affairs

Tackling climate issues  
in changing polar region



Americans with Disabilities Act

Department  
Celebrates 25 Years  
of Accessibility

# STATE MAGAZINE



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## Submissions

For details on submitting articles to *State Magazine*, request our guidelines by email at statemagazine@state.gov or download them from <http://www.state.gov/statemag>. *State Magazine* does not purchase freelance material.

## Deadlines

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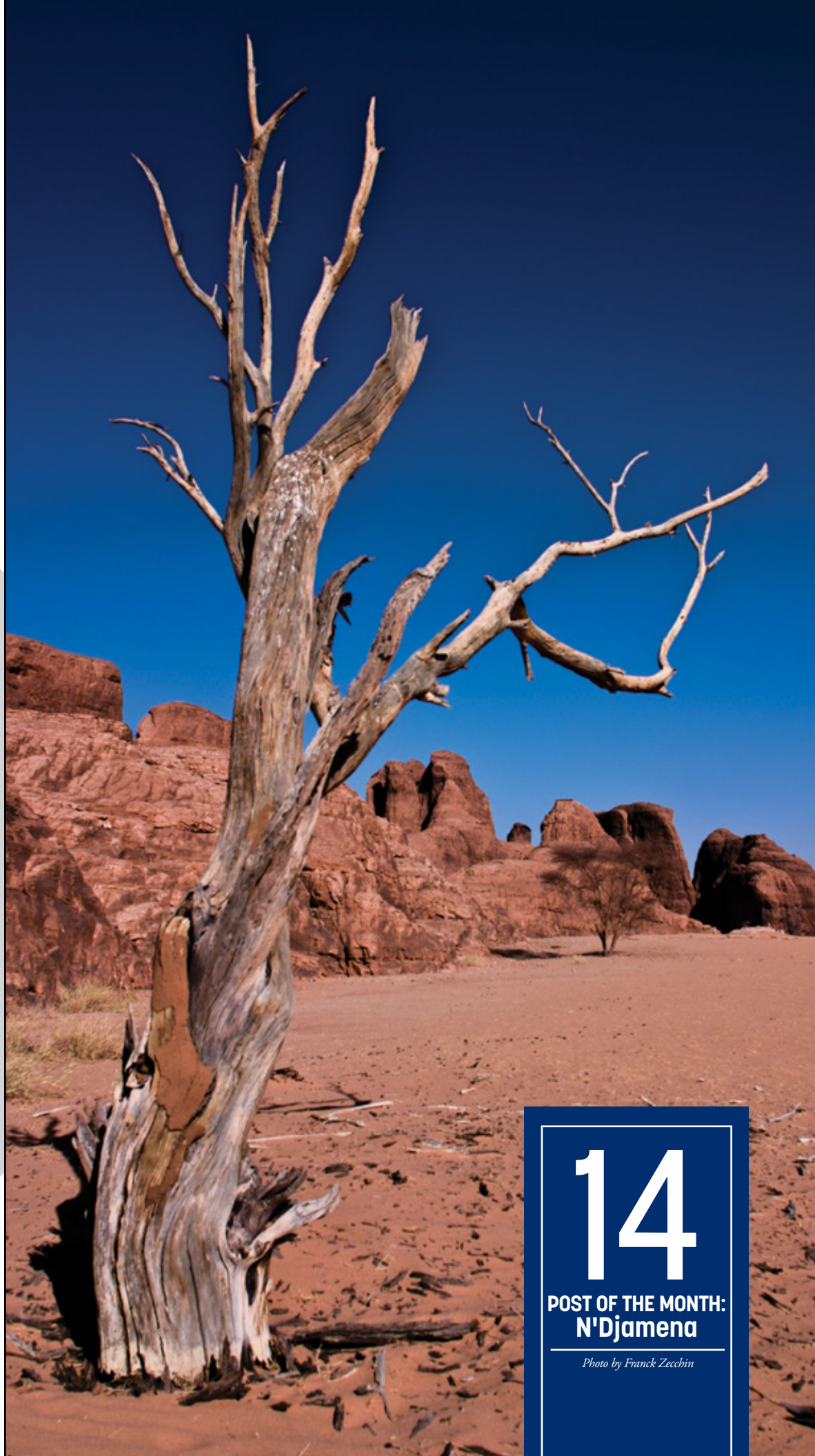
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# 14

**POST OF THE MONTH:  
N'Djamena**

*Photo by Franck Zecchin*



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Photo by Neil Palmer



Photo by Armando Aguayo Rivera



Photo by Erin Robertson



# Direct from the D.G.

ARNOLD CHACON,  
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE



## Celebrating 25 Years of Removing Employment Barriers and Empowering Persons with Disabilities

July 26 marked the 25th anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), historic legislation that prohibits discrimination based on mental and/or physical disabilities. To celebrate the occasion, the Department is hosting a series of events centered on disability issues, including a monthly ADA Speaker Series, disability recruitment events, a screening of the documentary “The Great Fight for Disability Rights” and museum displays, spearheaded by the Office of the Special Advisor on International Disability Rights (SAIDR), Disability Action Group (DAG), Office of Civil Rights (S/OCR) and Bureau of Human Resource’s Disability/Reasonable Accommodations Division (DRAD). The full calendar can be found on the DAG Share Point site.

The ADA provides protections against discrimination of Americans with disabilities, similar to the protections of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin and sex. In addition, the ADA took provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (prohibiting disability-based discrimination in government services, programs, and activities) and extended them to state and local governments and to the private sector. It requires employers to supply reasonable accommodations to employees with disabilities and imposes accessibility requirements on all public facilities and services.

On the 10th anniversary of the ADA, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13163, which called for the hiring of an additional 100,000 persons with disabilities into the federal government within five years, though few steps were taken by agencies to realize that goal. Exactly 10 years later, on July 26, 2010, President Obama signed an executive order once again reinforcing the commitment to hiring more persons with disabilities; this order contained measures that required agencies to be held accountable.

Both the administration and the Department of State remain committed to hiring and retaining persons with disabilities. Here at State, this commitment applies to both the Civil Service and Foreign Service, indeed, all employees.

Secretary Kerry and I are grateful to the disability community at State for the contributions that they make every day to our mission of protecting the American people and promoting their prosperity and security. In the Bureau of Human Resources (HR), we stand ready to work with, and support, employees with disabilities in any way we can.

In 2009, the Department created a division in HR’s Office of Employee Relations to provide one-stop services and assistive technologies to employees with disabilities. The Disability/Reasonable Accommodations Division (HR/ER/DRAD) assists current employees and partners with the Office of Recruitment, Examination, and Employment (HR/REE) to recruit job applicants with disabilities, including veterans with disabilities.

In 2015, our commitment to removing employment barriers and empowering people with disabilities will extend even further. Pending congressional approval, we are this year making plans to open a new HR Office, the Office of Accommodations and Accessibility (OAA), which will provide comprehensive disability policies and services in a centralized location. Later in the year, we plan to begin implementation of Phase I of the reorganization, which includes the merger of the Disability/Reasonable Accommodations Division with offices focused on ensuring the accessibility of the Department’s computer applications, websites and videos, including the Bureau of Information Resource Management’s (IRM) Section 508 Coordinator and the IRM Program for Accessible Computer/Communication Technology, and the new video captioning unit established by Under Secretary for Management Patrick F. Kennedy.

As Director General of the Foreign Service and Director of Human Resources, I look forward to working with the community to address disability issues. If you have ideas about how we can further improve working conditions for men and women with disabilities, please share them with me via unclassified email at [dgdirect@state.gov](mailto:dgdirect@state.gov). I look forward to hearing from you. ■

*Arnold A. Chacon*





## Do the Right Thing: A Practical Guide for Senior Leaders

The Department continues to make diversity and inclusion a top priority, recognizing that in the business of diplomacy we must leverage our most vital asset—our people. As we represent the United States worldwide, having a workforce that reflects our nation's diversity is fundamental to success. It's important that our workforce reflects diversity in its broadest context—from race, gender and sexual orientation to skills, education and experiences. We must leverage the diversity that our workforce offers and maintain a work environment that is inclusive of the various backgrounds our employees bring to the table.

To achieve our diversity and inclusion goals, we depend heavily on our employees—especially managers and senior leaders. Nearly all of them express their commitment to and support of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), but it is sometimes difficult to figure out exactly how to engage in proactive efforts. While many leaders want to do the right thing, EEO and diversity are areas where leaders may be unsure of what the right thing is. Leaders tend to play it safe in the midst of uncertainty and thus only give rhetorical attention to diversity and inclusion. So, what is the right thing to do?

Excellent leaders are uninhibited about displaying their commitment to positive values. They understand the important role they play in carrying out the principles of diversity and inclusion, and unabashedly do so. They are deliberate about symbolic and substantive behaviors to advance EEO and diversity, and it pays off. These outstanding leaders clearly demonstrate their commitment by modeling the principles of equity, fairness and inclusion, and periodically (at least semiannually) stating verbally and in print their commitment to EEO and diversity. They also ensure that their commitment is:

- Visible and available for all to see and hear,
- Specific, praising what works well and pointing out where improvements are needed, and is
- Discussed persistently, as often as budget and personnel issues, not just at commemorative month events.

If leaders do not speak in these terms, subordinates will believe that the expressions are merely rhetorical.

Leaders should also:

- Cascade the commitment down by holding subordinates responsible for any conduct that violates EEO principles.
- Use subject matter experts. The Department has many resources available to managers and employees. Be guided by those who know, such as S/OCR or the Bureau of Human Resources.
- Engage. Support Employee Affinity Groups and attend commemorative month events. Hold brown bag lunches to listen to employees and offer guidance on career advancement.
- Encourage managers to search broadly for talent, so that results produce an equitable, wider field of choices.

Most importantly, leaders should understand that their commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion is essential to any real and measurable progress. And when employees observe leaders demonstrate their commitment through various means, then they, too, will make it a priority. But if they are unsure of a leader's sincerity, then they, too, will choose to play it safe. ■

## Band Visit Promotes Bilateral Relations

The May visit of the U.S. Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) Band to Belarus, commemorating the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, represented the first time Belarusians heard a 34-piece U.S. military band perform. The band's visit easily eclipsed a much smaller ensemble's visit a decade ago.

Seen from the perspective of current U.S.-Belarusian relations, the visit was part of the step-by-step approach to improving the bilateral relationship, still recovering from the recall of ambassadors in March 2008, with the concomitant reduction in U.S. embassy staff from 35 to a current level of 6 U.S. officers. As the USAFE visit showed, both sides can work together on an issue of mutual interest.

The band performed in front of the Brest Fortress, the site of the first major Nazi-Soviet conflict from June 22-29, 1941, where more than 2,000 Soviets died and approximately 6,800 were captured. Despite occasional rain, around 1,000 spectators responded enthusiastically, demanding encores and mingling with the band afterward. The band later marched in the official Minsk Victory Day Parade and gave a concert in front of the Museum of the Great Patriotic War.



The USAFE Band performs on Victory Day, May 9, in front of the Museum of the Great Patriotic War in Minsk.  
*Photo by Yuri Dudinski*

Band members were buoyed by the audience reaction. Conductor Lt. Col. Michael Mench was interviewed by the media as part of an ongoing effort to ensure that nations who fought in World War II get the recognition they deserve. He also joined Chargé d'Affaires Scott Rauland to place a wreath at Brest Fortress's eternal flame.

The visit was also enthusiastically received by the Belarusian government. Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko praised the USAFE Band from the viewing platform at the Victory Day parade and saluted the ensemble as they marched past. Belarusian state media, rarely complimentary to anything American, was clearly charmed by the band's presence. After the band's departure, the state newspaper published a full-page article about the benefits of U.S. Lend-Lease to Belarus during WWII. ■

## Post Builds ties with Argentinians at Book Fair

The annual Buenos Aires International Book Fair, where the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires has had a booth every year for the past eight years, was attended by 1.2 million people over its three-week run, including busloads of schoolchildren, librarians from around the country and the public. At this year's fair, which ended in May, more than 28,000 people visited the booth.

The embassy finds the fair to be an excellent means for the Information Resource Center (IRC) and other embassy operations to highlight policy themes, such as innovation and entrepreneurship, and engage key Argentine audiences, including youth.

At this year's fair, young literary bloggers at the booth held a series of informal talks on topics ranging from realism to science fiction in American literature. Last year, the author of one young adult series signed books at the booth, breaking the fair's book-signing record; at one point, some 5,000 youths waited in line to meet him.

Other embassy-sponsored authors at the fair have included such luminaries as Tom Wolfe and Annie Proulx. The embassy also offers a glimpse of American culture with "USA Day," replete with cultural events such as a gospel choir or jazz performance.

The booth displayed classic American books, contemporary fiction and coffee-table books that were later donated to embassy partner libraries. It also distributed publications from the Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP), such as fliers on educational advising.



Young Adult author Dan Wells speaks at the 2015 Buenos Aires Book Fair.  
*Photo by Jorge Gomes*

This year, some 19,000 IIP publications were handed out. The booth also offered use of iPads loaded with literary classics, trade books and Department of State content. At the booth, consular and commercial section officials spoke about visas, and Department of Commerce staff discussed U.S. travel.

Every year, Mission Argentina spends six months in preparation for the event, with the IRC and other public affairs section staff selecting a theme and ordering publications in advance. Post employees set up the booth, create its programs, and staff it around the clock, spending nearly 200 hours total. Their use of social media to promote it has paid off: Total virtual engagements exceeded 54,000 this year, including Facebook events pages, live tweets from events, YouTube video views and photos posted to Flickr. ■



## Embassies Celebrate World IP Day

Throughout the world on April 26, American embassies and consulates held events to celebrate World Intellectual Property Day. At the U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, guests listened to a rock band and watched a screening of “Avengers: Age of Ultron.” At U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnamese saxophonist Tran Manh Tuan wowed a crowd. Meanwhile, U.S. Consulate General in Chiang Mai hosted a concert at the city’s Lanna Folklife Museum, featuring a Thai recording artist, rock bands and pop music groups from two local high schools. And, at the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, Special Representative Scott Nathan’s video message was shown at festivities featuring a local artist and a concert with two American bands.

The activities all promoted awareness about piracy and the value of supporting creative industries, and urged host governments, in partnership with industry and individual artists, to do more to prevent theft of intellectual property and strengthen the ability to prosecute offenders.

World Intellectual Property Day is held every April 26 and sponsored by the World Intellectual Property Organization, a U.N. agency with 188 members, including the United States. The event works to counter the piracy undertaken by those who believe music, movies, video games and other popular forms of entertainment are harmless to download, unaware of how such actions can cost the industry money and prevent



Saxophonist Tran Manh Tuan performs at CG Ho Chi Minh City's World Intellectual Property Day event.  
*Photo by Justin S. Conroy*

the financing and creating of future artistic works. Others pirate car parts or even airplane landing gear, and pharmaceuticals—more than 10 percent of medicines sold in the world are counterfeit.

Therefore, U.S. embassies work each year to get the message out worldwide that intellectual property rights are critical to protecting artists’ works and the jobs of U.S. and local citizens in creative and innovative industries. ■

## Open Doors Event in Bratislava a Success

On May 16, the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava, Slovakia, held its first “Embassies Open Doors” event, where 150 prescreened members of the public toured its historic location, including the ambassador’s office, and interacted with American and local staff. The embassies of Ireland, Finland and Croatia also joined the post in opening their doors to the public that day.

The event responded to criticism of the embassy’s fence, a modern security feature that sets the embassy apart from its surroundings on a historic square in Bratislava’s pedestrian Old Town. The event allowed mission staff to explain the embassy’s history and the richness of the U.S.-Slovakia relationship, and help change public perceptions.

The post’s executive office, regional security office, public affairs section, consular section, management and political/economic sections, plus the Marine Security Guards, all collaborated on the event. Embassy staff participated as tour guides, press coordinators, photographers, music/band coordinators, bag checkers, greeters and escorts.

Small group tours lasted 15 minutes and occurred every five minutes, traversing a prearranged path through the mission’s buildings and ending where visitors enjoyed refreshments and live American music. There, consular, foreign commercial service and Fulbright Commission representatives manned tables offering information about opportunities to travel, study, invest and work in the United States. Visitors could



During the Open Doors event, Ambassador Theodore Sedgwick gives a tour to a group that included Ladislav Kamenicky, parliament member and chairman of the Group of Friendship with USA and Canada.

*Photo by Igor Schneeweiss*

have their photos taken while sitting behind the ambassador’s desk or with members of the Marine Security Guard detachment in front of an American flag.

Ambassador Theodore Sedgwick led tours of high-level visitors and performed with his band, Diplomatic Immunity, drawing onlookers who heard the music from the nearby public square. In all, four bands from two local music schools played American music during the festivities. ■

## FSI Expands Arabic Program

FSI recognizes the importance of localized vocabulary and pronunciation and has expanded language instruction in dialects. In addition to the Colloquial Egyptian Arabic program, underway since the mid-1990s, the School of Language Studies recently expanded to include consular-specific instruction in nine Arabic language dialects.

FSI also teaches Arabic dialects as part of tradecraft modules that teach job-specific vocabulary and the eight-week Arabic FAST course that offers a quick introduction to the language. In September, two more Arabic dialects will be added to the Arabic basic course. FSI also continues to develop the Awareness, Language, and Emergency Response Training (ALERT) for Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) agents. ALERT provides instruction in five Arabic language dialects to meet the language needs of DS personnel overseas.

Beyond Arabic, FSI offers localized language instruction in the northern and southern Vietnamese dialects, Brazilian and Continental Portuguese, and the Serbo-Croatian family of languages, including Serbian, Bosnian and Croatian variants. When language proficiency levels



Showcasing FSI's facilities and its knowledge of the target dialect, language student Luke Meinzen conducts a mock visa interview with Egyptian Junior Diplomatic Corps delegates during a familiarization visit to the FSI campus.

*Photo by Atef Nazir*

and FSI staffing permit, students in FSI's largest programs are directed into classes instructed by staff members who are native to the students' posts of assignment. For more information about language instruction at FSI, contact [FSISLSConsultation@state.gov](mailto:FSISLSConsultation@state.gov). ■



Staff from U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv and U.S. Consulate General Jerusalem pose for a photo during Consular Leadership Day.

*Photo by Bahram Rajaei*

## Mission Holds Consular Leadership Day

Nearly 100 staff members from the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv and the U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem joined together on May 4 for the posts' first joint Consular Leadership Day. The joint exercise offered team building activities associated with the 1CA program and presentations by Ambassador Daniel Shapiro and Consul General Michael Ratney.

The day's theme was 360-Degree Diplomacy with the objective of "two missions, one goal."

To enhance cooperation between the missions, the event took place at the Oasis of Peace, a binational community halfway between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem established to support education and peace. The village provided a peaceful and inspiring setting for both local staff and officers.

David Schwartz, consul general at Embassy Tel Aviv, led a session on how consular work is a key element of U.S. foreign policy, and noted key

principles that each employee can use daily to actively support our interests. Aaron Hellman, chief of the consular section in Jerusalem, led a session on identifying ways for employees at the consulate and embassy to work better together, since they are located 60 kilometers apart but share common challenges.

Hands-on activities included team play: A "Consular Idol" song contest emphasized consular knowledge and creativity. Using references from the Foreign Affairs Manual and the Consular Leadership Tenets, each team composed original lyrics to the music of "Dancing Queen" by ABBA. The teams performed their songs and were judged by a jury of their peers.

Teams also participated in a treasure hunt in the village based on clues involving consular-specific questions. The activity was capped by the ultimate prize: breakfast courtesy of section chiefs Hellman and Schwartz. ■



## FLO, USAID Host Employment Forum

In May, the Family Liaison Office (FLO) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) hosted the 2015 Family Member Employment Forum. The forum focused on providing Foreign Service family members with the tools and resources to help them find employment while overseas.

Keynote speakers included Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Heather Higginbottom, Director General Arnold H. Chacon, USAID Senior Deputy Assistant to the Administrator for Human Capital and Talent Management Erin McKee and FLO Director Susan Frost. Deputy Secretary Higginbottom spoke of “the tremendous breadth of experience our family members contribute to our missions abroad,” and Ambassador Chacon recognized that “no two family members are the same; nor is there one solution to the career challenges facing each one.”

Forum participants attended workshops on such topics as using social media for job searches, conducting virtual interviews and learning about global employment trends. A panel on entrepreneurship featured five family members who shared their experiences, challenges and successes in building careers overseas.

Participant Elizabeth Cavert Morrison said she was inspired by the variety of experiences that people have had overseas and now feels more prepared. “I’m getting my outlook, mindset and attitude in a positive place to make constructive career choices,” she continued.

Participants were able to schedule sessions with career counselors throughout the day. A slideshow of advice and success stories from



Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Heather Higginbottom delivers the keynote address at the 2015 Family Member Employment Forum.

*Photo by Mark Stewart*

around the globe included a video from Ambassador Pamela White and a former Foreign Service family member. There was also a LinkedIn photo booth available for those needing professional-quality photos for their online profiles.

FLO Employment Program Coordinator Chris Baumgarten urged family members “to remain flexible, to remember that skill development is ongoing and, above all, to create employment plans A, B, and C.”

The Una Chapman Cox Foundation provided a grant for the event, and Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide provided refreshments. More information on family member employment resources is available on the FLO website. ■

## Embassy Greets WWII ‘Convoy of Liberty’

Vintage gloves from the 1940s led Janice Green, office management specialist at the U.S. Embassy in Prague, Czech Republic, to come up with a special way to greet the Convoy of Liberty as it celebrated the 70th anniversary of the nation’s liberation from the Nazis. The Convoy of Liberty, a group of World War II re-enactors, annually traces the 1945 march of the U.S. Army to liberate what was then Czechoslovakia.

The convoy starts in front of the U.S. Embassy with dozens of antique American vehicles and group members in vintage U.S. Army costumes. “Every year embassy staff members salute the convoy and wish them well on their informal Liberation Day parade through the streets of Prague. This year I was thinking we could do more,” said Green. After spotting a pair of her mother’s classic gloves, she had the idea of donning World War II-era costumes rented from a local film studio. Many local staff members also simply raided their grandmothers’ closets.

Around 50 embassy employees, including Deputy Chief of Mission Steven Kashkett and wife Wendy Goldman, came out to join the re-enactors in their vintage attire, crowding the small square in front of the embassy to the surprise and cheers of onlookers, an event filmed by Czech Television.

In all, the embassy supported more than 50 events celebrating the 70th anniversary. Ambassador Andrew Schapiro and embassy employees participated in traditional wreath-laying ceremonies at monuments for American soldiers in more than 50 Czech towns. Elsewhere, a dozen



Wendy Goldman and her husband, DCM Steven Kashkett, pose before Embassy Prague.

*Photo by Tarek Abu Sham*

embassy employees rode bicycles more than 60 kilometers along the route of General George S. Patton, visiting monuments in little towns along the way. One employee participated in a relay race from Germany to the Czech Republic to honor the U.S. Army’s mission to save the famous Lipizzaner horses. The American Center in Prague hosted an exhibition of previously unseen photographs of American soldiers liberating the small Czech town of Cimelice. The post’s webmaster, Marketa Kristova, designed a WWII-era “Liberation Newspaper” that summarized the history of the country’s liberation by American troops and was distributed at numerous events and even delivered to the Czech parliament.

“This year was extraordinary because usually we only manage to attend about 10 events,” said Petr Dolezel, press assistant and one of the main embassy organizers. “It shows that the ties between the Czechs and Americans are still strong after 70 years and Czechs still know that it was the U.S. that brought freedom to the region.” ■

## PD Group Announces Winners

Eight Department of State employees whose work addressed issues ranging from Ebola in Africa and women's rights in Afghanistan to social media in China and trade agreements in Europe received public diplomacy awards from the Public Diplomacy Alumni Association (PDAA) in May. The PDAA is a volunteer, nonprofit organization of current and former public diplomacy professionals from the Department and other organizations.

Kimberly Phelan-Royston and Emily Green from U.S. Embassy Conakry, Sally Hodgson and Molly Westrate from U.S. Embassy Monrovia, and Hollyn Green from U.S. Embassy Freetown won for developing and implementing public health messaging campaigns to educate the populace on hygiene and other practices in nations affected by Ebola. Their efforts helped reduce the transmission of Ebola, said Todd Haskell, director of the Bureau of African Affairs' Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

Another winner, Consul General Jennifer Zimdahl Galt in Guangzhou, China, was recognized for her work in overcoming the Chinese government's media restrictions by using her hashtag to launch the U.S. government's presence on major Chinese social media websites. Her frequent posts in fluent Chinese attracted as many as 400,000 views and reposts, and reached an estimated 1.2 million Chinese followers. FSO Thao Anh Tran, who accepted the award for Galt, said Galt's posts "established a foundation for effective outreach for future generations of public diplomacy professionals and government officials operating in China."



One of the PDAA award winners, Sally Hodgson, center, discusses projects for public outreach on Ebola with recently returned 2014 Mandela Washington Fellows.

*Photo by U.S. Embassy Monrovia*

"Said," a winner whose name was withheld for security reasons, has since 2004 managed the first American Corner in Afghanistan, helping women advance in Afghan society. Despite threats against him and his family, Said expanded women's participation at the Corner to more than 28,000 in 2014. He held roundtables on such issues as education and civil society, stopping violence against women and countering violent extremism. Accepting the award for Said, Jean Manes, principal deputy coordinator in the Bureau of International Information Programs, said, "He is the heart of what we do around the world."

Trade Officer Angela Palazzolo was honored for spearheading development and implementation of Mission Poland's public outreach on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP). The effort was cited as a best practice by the Department and incorporated into a pilot program for three other European posts. One deputy U.S. trade representative said that, "if every post had a trade officer like Angela, we'd have T-TIP promotion taken care of across the European Union."

More information about PDAA's activities is on its website. ■

## CG Jerusalem Unveils Collaborative Mural

Inspired by a local school's message of peaceful coexistence, the U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem brought Israeli and Palestinian students together with two American artists to turn a message of hope and peace into art. The students were from Jerusalem's Hand in Hand School, founded to teach coexistence and create a safe environment for children from varying backgrounds to learn together, apart from the region's political divide.

Artists Max Levi Frieder and Joel Bergner worked with students to create a wall mural that is not just a pretty painting, but a depiction of the troubled past and hopeful future for the Middle East. Looking from right to left, as done when reading both Arabic and Hebrew, the mural's message evolves from a painful disunity among diverse peoples to a brighter day in which differences are embraced. The artwork envisions a society where citizens from all backgrounds can join together in empowered common humanity, an ideal that the multicultural participants proved through the creation of this mural.

More than a dozen Hand in Hand students painted the mural on seven sheets of thick Plexiglass that, when fully assembled, stretched 12 meters across and 3 meters tall. Each piece of Plexiglass weighs 111 kilograms and required a team of eight contractors to transport and



Artist Max Levi Frieder explains the concept behind the mural as Consul General Michael Ratney looks on at the unveiling event, June 3. *Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco*

mount at Consulate General Jerusalem's Arnona Consular Compound. Consul General Michael Ratney led an unveiling ceremony attended by the artists, students, mission staff and local media. There, he reiterated the message of common humanity among diverse people.

Selecting the compound's courtyard to display the mural was significant. Each day, hundreds of people from varying ethnic, religious and political groups pass through the visitor's area to apply for U.S. visas and passports or other consular services. They now can stop to admire the mural and see the message that coexistence is possible. The mural's creation not only allowed the consulate general to facilitate a fun event for Palestinian and Israeli students, but it serves as a daily reminder to everyone of America's commitment to Middle East peace. ■



# Science Fellows

## Program leverages U.S. science expertise

By Andrew J.R. Gillespie, Ph.D., Embassy Science Fellow from the Environmental Protection Agency, and Raffi V. Balian, regional ESTH hub officer for Central and Eastern Europe (CEE)

**T**he Department of State's Embassy Science Fellows (ESF) program provides opportunities for U.S. government scientists to share their expertise and knowledge with U.S. embassies, host governments, universities and civil society organizations around the world. Since 2001, the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES) has placed an average of 25 scientists per year from 15 U.S. federal agencies, including the National Institutes of Health, the Environmental Protection Agency, NASA and the departments of Energy and Agriculture. The scientists spend up to three months at an American embassy or partner organizations within the host country to provide advice and assistance on science and technology issues. The federal agencies involved typically cover the salary, per diem and international travel costs for their employee, while the host embassy makes arrangements, partnering with local institutions, to cover local travel, lodging and office space. ESF holders have done projects ranging from advising on coastal surveying and mapping in the Marshall Islands to supporting sustainable development and monitoring air quality in Hong Kong.

Recently, the Regional Environmental, Science & Technology, and Health (ESTH) hub office for Central and Eastern Europe, based in U.S. Embassy Budapest, collaborated with the U.S. Embassies in Bratislava and Skopje to design and implement the first multicountry fellowship in the program's history. The three embassies hosted, for one month each, Dr. Andrew Gillespie, associate director for ecology at the EPA's National Exposure Research Laboratory in North Carolina. Dr. Gillespie brought 25 years of experience from the research laboratories and organizations of the U.S. Forest Service and Environmental Protection Agency. He focused on sharing knowledge and raising awareness on the impacts of climate change on the future health and sustainability of forests in Europe and North America.

In Hungary, Dr. Gillespie began his fellowship with a lecture at the Central European University (CEU) on climate change and its impacts on forests. The newly-arrived Chief of the U.S. Mission to Hungary, Ambassador Colleen Bell, delivered opening remarks and highlighted the importance that President Obama and Secretary Kerry place on reaching an international agreement this year in Paris to tackle climate change. After meetings with forestry officials in Budapest, Dr. Gillespie spent the next four weeks embedded in the Faculty of Forestry at the University of West Hungary in Sopron, which has taught forestry since 1806. He worked with members of the faculty, reviewed research papers, visited some long-term research areas and taught an 18-hour graduate course on forests and climate change. In between, he visited nearby national parks, which play a critical role in the ecosystem of the surrounding areas.

In Bratislava, Dr. Gillespie met with the Slovak Ministries of Environment and Agriculture and with U.S. embassy colleagues to discuss climate change policy and forest management practices. He then went to the town of Zvolen, home to the Technical University (TUZVO), which aims to become a center of excellence for peer-reviewed forestry science. While at TUZVO, Dr. Gillespie conducted seminars for faculty and students on a variety of U.S. forestry issues,



Dr. Andrew Gillespie talks to high school students about forests and climate change at the American Corner center in Bitola, Macedonia. *Photo by Embassy Skopje*

focusing on the impacts of climate change and lessons from the U.S. experience. Dr. Gillespie also visited several forest research sites, including for three days the Tatra Mountain National Park in north central Slovakia. "The practice of forestry in Slovakia, as in Hungary, is in an advanced state of science," he observed, "so it was rewarding for me to meet and build professional connections."

Compared with Hungary and Slovakia, Macedonia provided a different and challenging environment and forest ecosystem. Macedonia is rich in biodiversity, but its traditions and practice of forest management are not well-established. Nevertheless, the country is heavily dependent upon forests, because around 70 percent of its 2.5 million population still relies on firewood for heating in the winter. Macedonia is also investing less than other nations in preparing its forests for the effects of climate change. Dr. Gillespie worked with government officials and civil society representatives, along with peers from the Forestry Faculty at the University of Saints Cyril and Methodius. He presented on U.S. forestry practices and preparation for climate change, and worked with professional counterparts to develop a set of recommendations for the government of Macedonia to use in mitigating the impact of climate change on its forests.

Throughout the fellowship, Dr. Gillespie discussed with researchers how forest ecosystems have evolved within local climates, particularly as they become vulnerable to changes in temperature and precipitation. The United States aims to modify its forest management practices to increase the health and resilience of forested ecosystems, making them better able to withstand the adverse impacts of climate change.

The ESF program promotes the Department's collaboration with other federal government agencies and builds strong partnerships with governments and civil society organizations in host countries. The program helps U.S. embassies bring high-level scientific and technical expertise to advance mission goals and priorities. Fellows can help build and expand the embassy's relationships and partnerships with the host country in scientific and technical areas of mutual interest and importance, and also serve as mentors and technical advisors to embassy staff, helping them increase their knowledge and develop professionally.

More information about the ESF program is available from the program coordinator, Patricia A. Hill, or on the program's website. More information about the Regional ESTH Hub for CEE is available from Raffi Balian and on the hub's Web page. ■

## 'Puzzle' Solved

### QDDR Office produces new review

By Susan Babin, staff assistant to the Special Representative for the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review

**R**eleased in April, the 2015 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) responds to Secretary of State John Kerry's call for a "product that guides a modern Department of State and USAID, and empowers our front line diplomats and development professionals to get the job done." This guide serves as a blueprint of broad policy goals that infuse every aspect of our work and as a plan to allocate resources to achieve them. Implied in its name, as a constantly evolving document, the QDDR takes a four-year, forward-looking view to project our priorities. Trying to minimize the guesswork in this process is one of its most daunting tasks. As he released the report, Secretary Kerry said, "Assembling the QDDR—it's like putting together one jigsaw puzzle from a box that contains pieces from about six or seven puzzles."

To get the right pieces together, more than a year ago the QDDR Office began to build a team that reflected the fullness of the Department's workforce. With a dedicated core of six people, the office

forged a crew composed of Foreign Service officers, specialists and civil service employees of varying ranks, including staff pulled from human resources, economic and business affairs, international security and nonproliferation, and management. The team also included contractors, non-career experts from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and detailees from USAID and the Department of Defense. While the office had no Locally Employed Staff, it made an effort to ensure their voices were heard. Production of the QDDR was overseen by two co-chairs, Deputy Secretary Heather Higginbottom and former USAID Administrator Raj Shah. The office itself, which became permanent under the deputy secretary for management and resources in 2012 to manage and oversee the development and implementation of the QDDR cycle, was led by Special Representative Tom Perriello, a former member of Congress who previously worked overseas with NGOs.

Building the right team was a small part of the actual effort. The office engaged in a participatory process at all levels and with

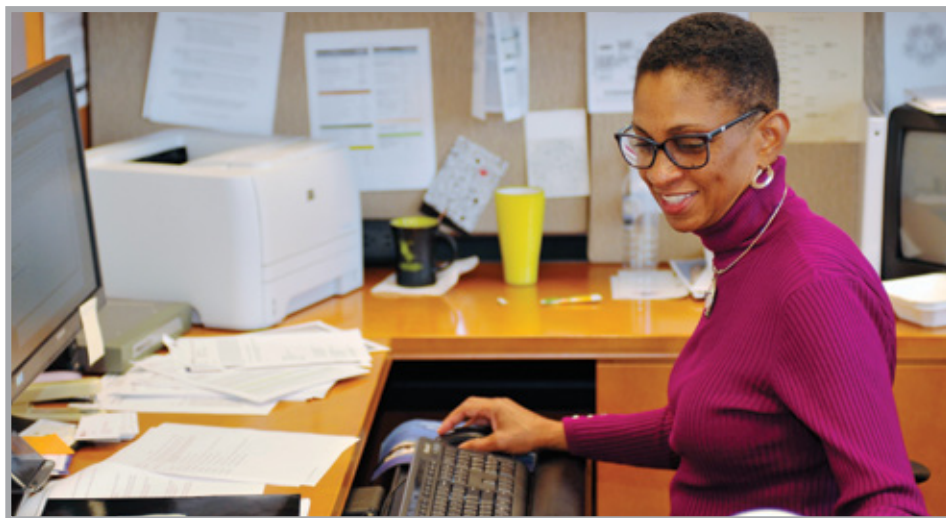


The author smiles during a break in action at the office.  
*Photo by Mark White*

all elements of the Department, both in Washington and at posts around the globe. Those involved included former State and USAID professionals and the Department's partners on Capitol Hill, at think tanks and in the NGO community. QDDR Office staff visited or spoke with staff from more than 50 posts and conducted a QDDR Sounding Board Challenge that brought forth more than 200 ideas and 4,700 viewers. This inclusivity proved extremely valuable, helping the QDDR team craft a document that represents the thinking of both State and USAID.

The course of the QDDR was set in 2009 when then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton applied the same strategic rigor to civilian power that had been demanded for decades at the Department of Defense. This latest QDDR builds on lessons from the initial review and reinforces key messages within the Joint Strategic Plan and the National Security Strategy. As Adam Lusin, the longest-serving member of the QDDR team noted, "Our goal was to harmonize various plans that have been completed before, so that our process of strategic planning builds off of those efforts and continues to iteratively adjust and clarify our diplomatic and development priorities."

The 2015 QDDR reflects the accomplishments of the 2010 review and deepens our work in key policy areas, including preventing conflict and violent extremism, promoting inclusive economic growth and accountable, democratic governance, and mitigating climate change. It also takes a critical look at risk taking, both internally in communication and decision making, and physically, in our access to the people and places at the core of our work. There is a significant focus on training and leadership development, and an elevation of the importance in including climate as a major



The office's then-Deputy Director Marion Ekpuk, works on a project. She is now executive director of the executive office of EB-ENR.  
*Photo by Mark White*





The staff holds a discussion in the QDDR Office's conference room.

*Photo by Mark White*

part of our diplomatic and development efforts, at ministerial, national and subnational levels. Perhaps the biggest buzz is around the data and analytics piece, which proposes a more centralized effort to get at the facts, trends and numbers that show the relevance and success of our efforts.

From a personal perspective, from the time I arrived, the office environment felt a bit like starting out with a cohort in graduate school. Deputy Director Marion Ekpuk succinctly described the structure: “Despite our titles, we operated as a flat organization. We wanted to create an environment that facilitated information sharing and free debate about topics for which there might not be only one right answer.” And in the months after the April 2014 launch, the QDDR Office indeed had an academic air about it, one in which theories, possibilities and research trajectories swirled freely. The group dynamic was one of openness, catering to innovation and agility, and often ending with late-night discussions over pizza. As the team bonded over timelines, possibilities and work goals, music became an important element to energize the flow of ideas within the office.

Then came the final clearance and production of the document. This felt like the kind of organized chaos you might expect when trying to build a house on an impossible deadline: Despite having the required materials, strong foundation and resources, we needed to bring it all together. Internally, we all wanted to produce a report that visually represented the diversity of our organizations. Forced to make choices because of limited space, there were spirited debates about graphics and design, and how many pertinent references to include relative to those from other offices. Big ideas, in some cases, were narrowed to more realistic levels, and people fought passionately about reforms they believed would make our lives better here in the Department and USAID.

Together, the team and the building worked through the differing viewpoints and considerations to build a strong and balanced final report.

The next step is implementation, and the office of the QDDR will continue to work alongside Deputy Secretary Higginbottom and her team in the planning, monitoring and carrying out of the goals and ideas put forth in the review. Throughout the implementation phase, as it was in the development of the report, we encourage strong participation. All are welcome to share their thoughts and ideas by emailing the QDDR team at [QDDRIdeas@state.gov](mailto:QDDRIdeas@state.gov), or just stopping by Room 6805 of the Harry S Truman building. More information on the office, the report and ongoing work is on the QDDR website. ■

## 10 Factors the QDDR Promotes

1. **Family-Friendly Policies**, including expanded career breaks for employees and career support for Eligible Family Members.
2. **Training**, including support for FSI's Diplomatic Mastery curriculum, real-time training modules, additional long-term training opportunities with substantive performance evaluations and increased partnerships with universities.
3. **Leadership**, including hands-on coaching for first-time managers, experienced managers leading roundtable discussions at posts, and feedback and accountability at all levels.
4. **Nimble Workforce**, including added excursion tours and movement into and out of the Department, more senior opportunities for civil servants and Locally Employed Staff, and greater agility to hire/deploy expertise quickly.
5. **Wellness and Resilience** at home and at posts, including training for resilience before, during and after serving in challenging postings.
6. **Economic Diplomacy, Governance and Prevention** to fight corruption, promote democracy and the rule of law, and give young people an alternative to extremism.
7. **Agility and Risk** through a senior-level agility review and implementing the new risk-management framework, and starting a candid, public dialogue about risk mitigation and management and the necessary tradeoffs.
8. **Engaging with America**, including greater opportunities to connect directly and virtually with American students, civic groups and diaspora leaders to promote a “whole of America” approach to diplomacy and development.
9. **Economic and Climate Expertise** that ensures all State and USAID officials see increasing competency on inclusive economic growth and climate as essential to their professional development.
10. **Partnerships That Go Beyond the Nation-State**, while maintaining traditional diplomacy, using all forms of international connection and engagement to further Department goals.



Office Director Chris Hegadorn speaks at the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) in October 2014 on the importance of fish and fisheries to global food security.

*Photo courtesy of FAO*



*Photos by Neil Palmer (CIAT)*

# FIGHTING HUNGER

## Office helps ensure world's access to food

By Julia Duncan, foreign affairs officer,  
Secretary's Office of Global Food Security

**F**ood security is a multifaceted challenge that impacts every country around the world. The Secretary's Office of Global Food Security (S/GFS) uses every diplomatic tool at its disposal to address hunger, malnutrition and extreme poverty.

Led by Dr. Nancy Stetson, special representative for Global Food Security since June 2014, the office works with such multilateral groups as the G7 and G20, engages in international negotiation and supports the president's global hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future. The initiative seeks to alleviate the causes of poverty, hunger and malnutrition by leveraging multilateral institutions, increasing sustainability, prioritizing strategic coordination and supporting accountability. It focuses on smallholder farmers, particularly women, and has helped 19 countries bolster their agricultural sectors for economic growth. As a result, nearly 7 million food producers have adopted improved technologies or management practices that have reached more than 12.5 million children through

nutrition programs preventing and treating under-nutrition and improving childhood survival rates.

Feed the Future's principles are critical to S/GFS priorities and are carried out through multilateral negotiations and the office's diverse portfolios. Dr. Stetson's previous negotiating experience provided the expertise to help S/GFS keep up with changing global realities.

Anticipating and planning for emerging challenges like climate change, pressures on development financing, urbanization and nutrition is where Stetson and S/GFS have begun to provide leadership in the food security space. Climate change and food security are uniquely tied because climate change affects how and where we produce food. Protecting soil, water and the health of forests, rivers and the oceans are all key components of the food system, and U.S. policies and diplomatic efforts therefore focus on preserving functioning ecosystems. To answer a mandate from the president and Secretary Kerry, the U.S. government has helped launch the voluntary Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture (GACSA), composed of partners across all sectors who address the challenges of food security in a changing climate.

S/GFS supports the alliance by developing demonstration initiatives that can serve as models for climate-smart development. For example, across the Caribbean, livelihoods and food security depend in large part upon healthy oceans, sustainable fisheries and resilient coastal ecosystems. Threats from climate change, including more frequent and intense storms, sea level rise, elevated surface water temperature and ocean acidification, will thus reduce regional food security. To respond, S/GFS and partners



are developing the Caribbean Oceans and Aquaculture Sustainable facility (COAST), a new diplomatic effort to promote regional climate-smart food security. It aims to create incentives-based insurance to manage the risks of climate change for the fisheries sector and has incentives to reduce fisheries' environmental impact.

The Department has committed \$5 million to the COAST initiative, and S/GFS is working with the World Bank, the Food and Agricultural Organization, and other GACSA members to create what could be a model for risk insurance that will encourage climate-smart practices. Deputy Secretary of State Anthony Blinken said the initiative is consistent with the Department's involvement in the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture and will "help the most vulnerable cope with the effects of climate change."

Beyond promoting climate-smart food production, COAST is also a model for innovative financing. Official development assistance continues to become a smaller component of overall development financing compared with domestic resources from developing countries, private capital flows, foreign direct investment, private philanthropy and remittances. Foreign assistance must look to new methods of investment that leverage and maximize these other resources.

Another challenge to food security arises from population migration. At an international meeting this year, Stetson delivered remarks about The Economist's 2015 Global Food Security Index and called attention to the impact of increased urbanization on food security. Five million people are moving to cities every month, a mass migration imposing several challenges on the food system. Urban food security and nutrition requires a focus on infrastructure, water, refrigeration, sanitation, energy and transportation.

To promote good nutrition for the world's people, S/GFS leads the Department's diplomatic work on nutrition and strives to ensure nutrition is part of any dialogue on food security, health or sustainable development. S/GFS has championed nutrition since its inception. In 2010, it launched the 1,000 Days Partnership, which calls for action toward better nutrition in the critical 1,000-day window from a woman's pregnancy to a child's second birthday, a period when better nutrition can have a lifelong impact. Last year, S/GFS shepherded U.S. engagement in the Second International Conference on Nutrition, where the world's health and agriculture communities envisioned a future food system that would eliminate malnutrition in all its forms. Now, S/GFS is focused on ensuring nutrition is discussed at



Members of the S/GFS staff include, from left, Chris Hegadorn, Olivia Gilmore, Liz Buckingham, Julia Duncan, Special Representative Nancy Stetson, Caitlin Welsh, Dan Oerther and Steven Johnson.

*Department of State Photo*

multilateral fora, such as the G7 Summit in Germany and the post-2015 development agenda being negotiated in New York ahead of the U.N. General Assembly.

Food security remains a Department priority and is tied to U.S. national security, and international stability and development. According to the World Bank, agricultural development is two to four times more effective in raising incomes among the very poor than growth in other sectors. Food is a building block for economic prosperity, peace, health and development.

S/GFS and its partners in the U.S. government and beyond will continue to actively address food security and nutrition challenges to help deliver on the U.S. investments in global development and shared prosperity. ■



Special Representative for Global Food Security Nancy Stetson, second from right, participates in a panel discussion in Milan in May when the *The Economist's* GFSI figures were released.

*Photo courtesy of DuPont Pioneer*

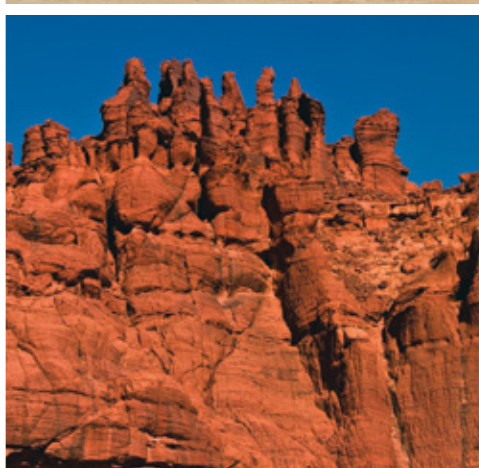




# Chad

A committed partner in a volatile region

By Julie Nickles, public affairs officer, Embassy N'Djamena



From top, left to right: Photos by SuSanA Secretariat; European Commission DG ECHO; Ben Allen; Albert González Farran, UNAMID; United Nations Chad; U.S. Army Sgt. Timothy Clegg; silvia; United Nations Chad; Franck Zecchin.



**R**eminding oneself of the beauty that Africa holds close to its heart is a rare treat when serving at a hardship post, especially in a country that has been beset by as much turmoil as Chad. Thanksgiving Day weekend 2014 was one of those moments. For the group of American embassy employees who ventured out to Chad's Zakouma National Park, the safari camp that served as a rest stop with all its modern amenities was part primordial oasis and part proving ground for a U.S. mission success story.

First and foremost, the park was a stunning feast for the eyes with herds of giraffe, water buffalo and hyenas; lazy crocodiles; colorful exotic birds everywhere; elephants and many baboons mingling among them all. It was a setting fit for a world-class, eco-friendly nature preserve, which is just what the Chadians are intent on developing.

Zakouma National Park's elephant populations are recovering from a devastating surge in poaching in the mid-2000s, which killed thousands of them. A four-week training exercise led by 15 U.S. Marines from the Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Africa, with Chadian park rangers and a 2014 alumnus of the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), helped ensure that not one elephant has been poached there in the past three years. The 100 proud graduates of this program are now agents of Chad's environmental-crime mobile brigade, fighting poaching and ivory trafficking. Embassy N'Djamena's pol/econ section and office of security cooperation made this training possible, since mission priorities include protecting wildlife and cutting off terrorists' funding, which trafficking supports.

Situated at the edge of the Sahara desert and equidistant from the Mediterranean and the Gulf of Guinea, Chad is landlocked. Chad's economy

continues to develop and diversify away from dependence on oil revenues, which have been hard hit by the decline in oil prices.

N'Djamena, or "We Rest" in Chadian Arabic, offers a profusion of bougainvillea, frangipani and other tropical flora, but is also a bustling, multilingual city. The embassy's 450 American and Chadian employees carry on apace—often simultaneously in French, Arabic and English—while the post's profile and responsibilities continue to grow. Most government offices, commercial establishments and mission-occupied residential villas, many with pools, are in the modern town, while the more traditional homes of mud brick and thatched roofs are in the Quartiers Populaires.

Countering violent extremism (CVE) is a key issue in the region, both with Boko Haram and the instability in Libya to the north. Thus, Embassy N'Djamena is very active in CVE projects with funding coming from State, USAID and DOD resources through bilateral and regional mechanisms such as the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership. Often referred to as "an island in a sea of instability," Chad plays an important role in leading regional efforts to combat Boko Haram in Nigeria and the U.N.-led stabilization mission in Mali. The U.S. military launched its Flintlock 2015 training exercise in Chad in February with armies from



A welcoming committee lines the entrance to the town of Am-Zoer. Ambassador James Knight leads the way atop a camel.  
*Photo by Les McBride*

across Africa. Some 1,300 participants from 28 countries took part.

Also, a regional USAID Peace through Development (PDev) project to build up resilience to violent extremism engages the nation's youth, promotes community governance and strengthens moderate voices. PDev created four community radio stations with programming for youth and governance programs, allowing moderate messaging to reach a large audience in zones considered susceptible to extremism. After witnessing the impact of this program, the embassy identified additional funding managed by the Bureau



Sandbars become more pronounced in the Chari River during the dry season in N'Djamena.

*Photo by Ken Doer*



## Post of the Month

of African Affairs to establish more stations, bringing the total to 13.

Other mission efforts are directed at strengthening good governance and respect for human rights, addressing humanitarian needs and economic development, promoting women's and girls' rights, and increasing outreach to youth and to the Muslim population.

Chad is a secular state with a Muslim majority that practices a moderate form of Islam. Chadians take pride in the peaceful coexistence of Christians and Muslims and actively promote tolerance and diversity. The embassy supports locally initiated efforts at organizing interfaith dialogue. It has also funded programs to promote tolerance among religious leaders and training to Chadian teachers on active learning methods that foster creative thinking skills and civic values such as tolerance, nonviolence and human rights. A double exchange program with American and Chadian imams opened eyes and minds to the manner in which religious freedom is practiced in the United States. As one of the returned imams noted, "Americans believe that their country is for everyone and that religion is a personal issue. No one has the right to force others to accept a specific religion, yet Americans are a religious people."

The post's work to promote women's empowerment will positively affect Chad's political and economic development. The

post regularly organizes programs for both established and aspiring women leaders, such as Women Entrepreneurs and Women's Leadership seminars. A dozen local women leaders attended an April 2015 roundtable with a congressional delegation led by Senator Kirsten Gillibrand. Participants included several alumnae from the Young African Leaders Initiative/Mandela Washington Fellowship (YALI) and the IVLP.

"Our goal is to help prepare more women to run for office in anticipation of Chadian elections," said Ambassador Dr. James Knight. The Ambassador's Special Self-Help Program prioritizes small grants that benefit women in villages throughout Chad, such as the purchase of a grinding mill in one such village, which relieved women of hours of hard labor. Programs for girls emphasize the importance of education, discourage early marriage and warn of HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence and female genital mutilation. The Women2Women program connects teens in the U.S. and the Arab Muslim world and has benefitted 18 Chadian girls since 2012.

English is important for Chad's future to prepare young Chadians to compete in the global marketplace and strengthen democratic institutions. To increase the pool of future candidates for U.S.-sponsored exchange programs, the public affairs section actively promotes English teaching and use through



Embassy staff members, from left, Beth Abraham, Achta Ngamai, Jessica McTigue, Menodji Passeh, Magdalene Mbong, celebrate International Women's Day by wearing festive cloth designed for the occasion.

*Photo by Ali Kardas*

various programs. N'Djamena's English Access Micro-scholarship Program for talented [13-to-20-year-olds] from economically disadvantaged backgrounds started with 100 students in 2006. Today, the two-year program has 420 graduates and 220 current students, equally divided by gender and religion. "It has been a huge success," said Ericka Nanadoumgar, Access program director. "You can see it in the changes in the students' academic development and lives; they do better in school, their behavior improved, and they have an air of self-discipline and politeness, ready to do community service in their neighborhoods." Parents, some of whom at first were hesitant to have their children enroll in the Access program, now are so proud and, at times, emotionally moved by their children's quick transformation.

Embassy N'Djamena supports the government of Chad's efforts to protect and



Located 900 km east of N'Djamena, Farchana camp was at one time home to nearly 23,000 Darfurian refugees.

*Photo by F. Noy, UNHCR*



shelter nearly 500,000 refugees from Sudan, Central African Republic (CAR) and Nigeria fleeing violence in their homelands, plus another 100,000 vulnerable Chadian nationals who fled violence in the CAR in 2013–2014. True to its “island of stability” virtue, Chad has hosted refugees from CAR and the Darfur region of Sudan for more than a decade and continues to meet the inflows. Embassy N’Djamena and the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration mobilized more than \$55 million in FY14 funds to assist the humanitarian refugee response. Sharing the Chadian government’s commitment to identifying durable solutions for the most vulnerable refugees, Ambassador Knight has championed efforts to greatly increase the number of refugees being resettled to the United States.

Embassy staff are very involved in the local community. The American Corner’s English Club is very popular. There, volunteers on Saturday mornings provide adult members with conversation experience and exposure to U.S. culture and history. Others are involved with a small orphanage outside N’Djamena with

which the embassy has had a long-standing relationship. It supports 59 children from infants to age 18 who were abandoned, victims of trafficking, removed from abusive situations or whose families are too poor to support them. It provides schooling for the neighborhood’s poor children and also advocates for children who are victims of trafficking in persons, filing legal cases against traffickers. Since there is no government subsidy for orphanages, it relies solely on donations of private individuals and NGOs. During the Flintlock exercise, AFRICOM staff gave the children medical

screenings, repaired and built new furniture, and arranged for substantial donations to aid the orphans.

Last July, construction began on a more functional, safe and secure embassy complex to accommodate the needs of this rapidly growing post. Due for completion in late 2016, the new facility will transform the workplace and make a difference in the lives of all staff. Embassy N’Djamena is not a mirage, but is positioning itself to be a sustainable oasis in the Sahara desert and to serve as a solid platform for proactive diplomacy. ■



The future U.S. embassy complex in N’Djamena, as shown beside the Chari River in this Office of Overseas Building Operations model, is scheduled to open in late 2016.

*Illustration courtesy of OBO*



## At a Glance Chad

**Capital:** N’Djamena

**Government Type:** Republic

**Area:** 1,284,000 sq km

**Population:** 11,412,107

**Languages:** French, Arabic, Sara, more than 120 dialects

**Religions:** Muslim 53%, Catholic 20%, Protestant 14%, animist 7%, other or unknown 6%

**GDP per capita:** \$2,600

**Export partners:** U.S., Japan, India

**Import partners:** China, Cameroon, France, Belgium, India

**Currency:** Central African CFA franc

**Internet country code:** .td

# CA-LNA

## Program draws praise, cuts visa backlog

By Christa Byker, consular adjudicator, U.S. Embassy Mexico City; and Damien Vrignon, consular adjudicator, U.S. Consulate Matamoros, Mexico, both serving on Limited Non-Career Appointments



The fourth CA-LNA class poses with FSI instructors and then-Assistant Secretary Janice L. Jacobs, front center, after its swearing-in ceremony in March 2014. *Department of State photo*

Four years ago, the Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA) and the Bureau of Human Resources launched a pilot program to hire a new class of consular officers, a group of Limited Non-Career Appointees (LNAs), to staff consular positions in nations with high demand for U.S. visas, particularly Brazil and China. Historically, the Department had only hired LNAs individually to fill specific, specialized jobs. But rapidly growing visa workloads prompted CA to hire “Consular Adjudicator LNAs” as a class, mirroring FSI’s A100 model for bringing officers into the Foreign Service.

In early 2012, the inaugural class of consular adjudicators received assignments to Beijing, Guangzhou and Shanghai, as well as posts in Brazil, namely, Brasília, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Positive feedback from these posts encouraged CA to expand the program to include Spanish-speaking countries in 2013.

While the new CA-LNA consular officers look a lot like their FSO counterparts in terms of educational background, job experience and goals, they are distinguished by the fact that they must, before being hired, be fluent in the language of the place of assignment.

Consular adjudicators are a hybrid of Foreign Service specialists and generalists. They hold the same consular commission and adjudicatory responsibilities as entry-level FS generalists, but like specialists they begin the employment process through USAJobs.gov. Moreover, after initial application screening, they take the FS oral assessment, which incorporates such additional specialist elements as online tests for judgment, job knowledge, English expression and familiarity with the LNA program.

Unlike career Foreign Service employees, consular adjudicators are not evaluated for their potential to advance through the ranks, since the FAM limits their appointments to five years, renewable annually after an initial term of 27 months.

Consular adjudicators must be FSI language-qualified before they can receive an offer of employment. This means they must score 3/3 in Portuguese or Spanish, and at least 2/1 in Mandarin Chinese. Candidates are language-tested twice—first by telephone, then with a full FSI language exam administered after the oral assessment. After obtaining medical, security and suitability clearances, they receive the standard 31-day ConGen training and a brief orientation to assimilate into the Foreign Service.

To date, CA has hired 83 consular adjudicators on LNAs, and 55 are assigned overseas. To meet ever-growing visa and passport demand, CA intends to hire more than 100 consular adjudicators on LNAs over the coming year.

The program has also won praise from CA leadership. CA Deputy Assistant Secretary Edward Ramotowski sees the position as indispensable and said that, “without their help, the Department of State would not have been able to reach (and exceed) the presidential executive order goals of reducing visa appointment wait times worldwide and increasing visa processing capacity in China and Brazil by 40 percent.”

Don Jacobson, minister counselor for consular affairs at Mission Mexico, has worked with CA-LNAs in Mexico and Brazil and said he’s “been really impressed with the quality of people being hired and how quickly they get up to speed.”

Overseas, CA-LNAs have the same responsibilities and rotations as other adjudicators and enjoy the same benefits, such as overseas housing, educational allowances and diplomatic privileges. But, because they speak the local language well, they are often more comfortable and effective in a broader range of duties. Christopher Pistulka, a former CA-LNA in Brasília and



now an FSO in Monterrey, Mexico, said his language skills and local knowledge were particularly useful in the fraud interviews he conducted as a fraud prevention manager. “I was able to conduct the interviews myself if necessary instead of relying solely upon my LES investigator,” he noted.

Adjudicating visas at high-volume posts is formidable work and many appointees are ready to move on after five years, using their new-found knowledge and professional skills in related fields. I think five years is long enough,” said Breana Limina, who recently started at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing. “I probably would not continue longer.” However, Hare O’Donnell, who is also serving in Beijing and is on the hiring register to continue as a financial management specialist, said the five-year limit is counterintuitive. “I think CA-LNAs should be allowed to stay as long as there is a need for adjudicators with excellent language skills,” she observed.

Most CA-LNAs do find their time as an appointee deepening their interest in a Foreign Service career, and, though it’s not a “back door” into the Foreign Service, LNAs are encouraged to take the Foreign Service exam.

Jannick Taboada, a CA-LNA in Guadalajara, who will head to Santo Domingo next year, said the CA-LNA program lets those with an interest in the Foreign Service learn the intricacies of it in a more relaxed manner. “For those of us that want to ... eventually become standard FSOs, we will have had nearly eight years of consular experience before joining the mid-level ranks,” she said.

Alejandro Gonzalez, who is currently serving in Colombia and who will go to Guayaquil, Ecuador, next year, was put on the FSO register at the same time he received the CA-LNA offer and said, “I thought the CA-LNA [position] would be a good way to try out the Foreign Service and be assured of first and second tours in Spanish-speaking countries, which would make it easier for my Colombian wife to transition to the life of an FSO spouse.”

All in all, CA-LNAs seem to agree that the position is a good perch from which to explore Foreign Service career possibilities, while CA finds a valuable pool of highly motivated and skilled entry-level consular employees. ■



CA-LNA employees Damien Vrignon, left, and Jannick Taboada pose during Flag Day, when new Foreign Service LNAs learn their destinations.

*Photo courtesy of Jannick Taboada*



CA-LNA Willard Sturgill, second from left, participates in the 2015 Consular Leadership Day activity at Embassy Mexico City.

*Department of State photo*

# Visa Clarity

## Mission Mexico conducts student-travel outreach

By David Merrell and Alex Parcan, vice consuls,  
U.S. Consulate General in Guadalajara, Mexico

International students hoping to study in the United States are often stymied by such questions as, “Are there any scholarships or grants available?” and “What type of visa do I need?” Since international students contributed 340,000 jobs and \$26.8 billion to the U.S. economy in the 2013–14 academic year alone, and their travel builds bilateral bridges, President Obama has made promoting study in the U.S. and abroad a priority. His 100,000 Strong in the Americas initiative seeks to send 100,000 Western Hemisphere students to study in the United States and 100,000 U.S. students to study throughout the Western Hemisphere by the year 2020.

Given the long and active U.S.-Mexico border and the important cultural, social and economic ties binding the nations, the United States and Mexico have key roles in this initiative. Mexico now aims to send 100,000 Mexican students to the United States to study and host 50,000 U.S. students in Mexico by 2018. To facilitate student travel under these bilateral initiatives, Mission Mexico is engaging more partners and informing more students.

One popular outreach method is for consular officers and Locally Employed (LE) Staff to speak at local universities about the student visa process. Foreign Service officers and staff tell students of the different types of student visas and what happens in the visa interview. To develop their presentation materials, officers and LE staff at the U.S. Consulate General in Guadalajara drew upon resources produced by posts in Brazil, China and India to create Spanish materials that were posted on the Mission Outreach SharePoint site. Guadalajara Nonimmigrant Visa (NIV) Chief Paul Schultz said the materials will not become dated quickly and can be used throughout the mission.

NIV officers at the U.S. Consulate General in Nogales have since downloaded the materials and adapted them for their presentations at two universities in that city. There, they shared personal experiences about studying in the United States and explained the student visa application process. These events drew good attendance of about 50–60 students and resulted in lively discussions. The U.S. Consulate General in Tijuana held similar events over the past year, including seven live presentations at the consulate and at local universities and high schools.

Posts in Mexico also coordinate college fairs. Despite security challenges in parts of Mexico, the mission has attracted representatives from a wide variety of U.S. higher education institutions interested in recruiting Mexican students for U.S. study. As part of these efforts, consular, public diplomacy and LE staff members are working with U.S. universities to provide students in Mexico with information and materials about U.S. study. Organizers at the U.S. Consulate General in Monterrey, for example, held a college fair in May that featured 30 U.S. universities and drew approximately 200 Mexican students and parents. Prior to the event, the Monterrey team consulted with Consulate General Ciudad Juárez on best practices and potential recruiter contacts, and built upon lessons from Nuevo Laredo’s college fair to develop a speaker program on student visas and a presentation by EducationUSA.

Consulate General Nuevo Laredo’s third annual college fair this year hosted more than 400 students and family members, and

included representatives from several U.S. educational institutions; 30 colleges provided admissions materials. From 2012–2014, Consulate General Ciudad Juárez worked with U.S. colleges and local partners to organize and participate in several college fairs in the state of Chihuahua, re-establishing relationships between higher education institutions in Chihuahua and the United States.

The mission also uses technology to disseminate its student travel messages. Embassy Mexico City’s NIV unit, for instance, posts information once or twice a week on social media about international student travel, reaching as many as 78,000 people per post. The embassy also held a Google Hangout session with more than 250 participants and conducted four radio and TV interviews about the student visa process. During a one-hour radio interview, callers and people on Twitter posed more than 30 questions. The radio show producer then retweeted all the questions to the embassy’s Twitter account for follow-up. As a multiplying factor, the embassy also posted the radio and TV interviews on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. (Posts throughout Mexico often repost information for their readers originally posted by the embassy.)

Coordination of these efforts has saved time, as organizers of outreach events avoid duplicating others’ efforts. This will hopefully increase the number of students studying in the United States, building bridges of understanding and improving the economies of both countries. ■



Consul General Joseph M. Pomper, of the U.S. Consulate General in Monterrey, speaks to prospective students at the Monterrey college fair.  
*Photo by Marina Galkina*



Vice Consul Michelle Suarez explains the student visa application process to medical students at the University of Xochicalco in Tijuana.

*Photo by Omar Barrios*



# Media Milestone

## Facebook in the Kingdom of Wonder

By Jay R. Raman, public affairs officer, U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh

Cambodia is often called the “Kingdom of Wonder” thanks to its friendly people, natural beauty and extraordinary cultural heritage, including the world-famous ruins of Angkor. It hasn’t been known as a hotspot for technology and social media, but there are signs that this is starting to change. In fact, Cambodia is a surprising success story in the Department of State’s use of digital diplomacy.

In late May, the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh became just the seventh U.S. mission overseas to reach 500,000 Facebook fans. With a population of less than 16 million—and only 2.5 million Facebook accounts—Cambodia is by far the smallest member of this elite group, which also includes Pakistan, Bangladesh, Mexico, Egypt, Brazil and Indonesia. More than 1,000 new fans follow the embassy’s Facebook page each day, and the site is on pace to reach 1 million page likes by the end of 2016.

Cambodia is an unlikely member of the Department’s 500K Facebook club given the nation’s size and limited development, which can be traced in part to the genocide of the Khmer Rouge era that devastated both the nation’s population and infrastructure. The Internet was late arriving in Cambodia and slow to spread. Internet penetration is now estimated at 25 percent, but it still lags well behind the world average. Despite these challenges, social media usage has been rising quickly in recent years thanks to an expanding mobile data network, increasing availability of mobile devices and a large youth population that is eager to get online. One recent report found that social media usage—which only requires a data-enabled phone, not an internet connection, doubled from 2014 to 2015, one of the highest rates in Asia.

Responding to this surge, the mission shifted its focus to the embassy’s Facebook page, involving nearly every section and agency at post. “Our goal is to publish content that reflects the diversity of the United States and the work that we do at the embassy,” said Ambassador William Todd. “One of the secrets to our success is that the public affairs section has been able to draw on the expertise of colleagues throughout the mission, which keeps our content fresh and interesting.”

Through the Facebook page, the embassy has the ability to reach out directly to large numbers of Cambodians, particularly the 70 percent under the age of 35. “Cambodia is a very young country, and it is important that we give these young Cambodians an opportunity to interact with the embassy,” Ambassador Todd noted. “Our Facebook page makes it possible not only to communicate but also to engage and to receive feedback. Through social media, we are truly building a relationship with the next generation of Cambodian leaders.”

The Facebook page contains a mix of content, ranging from announcements for exchange programs to repostings of the ambassador’s weekly newspaper column. The embassy posts in English and Khmer, depending on the intended audience. Education and environmental-themed content do well, as do stories about Cambodian and U.S. pop culture.

Many posts generate lively comments from the audience, which helps the embassy to gauge the pulse of the public. Critical comments are inevitable—and healthy—but most users follow the example of the enthusiastic subscriber who recently exclaimed, “I am your fan! Love you guys!”

To celebrate the 500,000-Facebook-fan milestone, the embassy arranged for four special tuk-tuks, the ubiquitous Cambodian auto-rickshaws, to give passengers free rides for five days anywhere within a 5 kilometer radius. The tuk-tuks were fitted with a sign featuring the hashtag #USA500K, and the public was invited to send in selfies that were featured on embassy social media. The ambassador launched the campaign with a personal message, and the public affairs section produced a special video of the tuk-tuks in action.

The response to the tuk-tuk campaign was impressive, both on the streets and online. “The public reaction to our #USA500K campaign just goes to show the phenomenal level of support that we get from our Facebook fans day in and day out,” said Embassy Phnom Penh social media coordinator Eric Burley.

Facebook is the undisputed king of social media in Cambodia, but other sites such as Twitter are starting to catch on. Embassy Phnom Penh’s Twitter page is relatively modest, with 50,000 followers, but it is already the second-largest Twitter account in Cambodia. The embassy is also experimenting with Instagram, Vine and other newer social media sites that will likely increase in popularity as the nation’s number of smartphone users increases.

As Cambodia continues to develop, there is plenty of room for social media growth, and Ambassador Todd has high hopes for the future. “I am very proud to reach 500,000 Facebook fans,” he says, “but now let’s shoot for a million.” ■



Driver Son Thai gives a thumbs up in May for the U.S. Embassy Phnom Penh #USA500K campaign ad sign on the back of his tuk-tuk.

*Photo by Eric Burley*







**I**n April 2015, Secretary of State John Kerry flew to Iqaluit, a small town in the Canadian Arctic, to attend the ninth biennial ministerial meeting of the eight-nation Arctic Council, the pre-eminent circumpolar forum for addressing Arctic issues. The event began with an oil lamp lighting ceremony in a room decorated with seal skins, soapstone carvings and narwhal tusks, items of deep significance to the Inuit people of the Canadian Arctic.

After a long day of discussions, the outgoing chair of the Arctic Council, Canadian Minister of the Environment Leona Aglukkaq, handed Secretary Kerry a wooden gavel hand-crafted from birch and featuring images of a raven and salmon. With this gesture, Secretary Kerry became the new chair and the two-year rotating chairmanship of the Arctic Council passed from Canada to the United States.

At the Iqaluit meeting, Kerry spoke of the region's international importance. "It's a critical part of the global climate system...ensuring a stable, livable environment from Barrow, Alaska, to Beijing, China," he said, adding that the Arctic is rapidly changing. "How we as Arctic states, and indeed as a global community, respond to those changes over the coming months and years can literally make all the difference," he noted.

During its two years at the helm of the Arctic Council, the United States will work with other nations, through its own national agencies, with the state of Alaska, and with others at home and around the world to balance the development of resources with environmental stewardship, protect the culture and livelihoods of Arctic residents, and maintain the Arctic as a region of peace and stability.

The United States is an Arctic nation by virtue of the state of Alaska, one third of which lies above the Arctic Circle. It is joined in the Arctic Council by the seven other nations that also have territory above the Arctic Circle: Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. Six Permanent Participant groups representing the indigenous peoples of the Arctic serve on the Council in an advisory capacity. The Arctic Council was founded in 1996, and matters related to sustainable development, environmental protection, scientific cooperation and social issues make up the lion's share of its work—its mandate explicitly excludes military security.

Although to many people the Arctic may seem to be a frozen, empty expanse of ice and snow, it's very much alive, inhabited by more than 4 million people (including some 50,000 U.S. citizens residing above the Arctic Circle) and teeming with flora, fauna and marine life. It's a place where extreme distances and harsh weather create tight-knit communities with rich cultural traditions and where individuals have a deep and abiding respect for nature and all that it provides.

Alaska itself is more than twice as large as Texas, but while there are 27 million Texans, Alaska has a population of only 736,000. Because of the expense of building infrastructure over such great distances, there are relatively few roads in the state.

# ARCTIC AFFAIRS

**Region at top of U.S. foreign policy agenda**

By Erin Robertson, Arctic press and public affairs officer, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs



As such, many Alaskan villages are reachable only by plane or boat, which makes food, fuel, education and healthcare exponentially more expensive. Life in the American Arctic is further complicated at times by challenges such as a lack of running water, poor sanitation and a reliance on diesel generators for electricity and heat. Diesel fuel has detrimental effects not just on the pocketbooks and health of Arctic residents, but it also plays a role in climate change by accelerating the melting of Arctic ice.

Embassy Ottawa colleagues learned more about the importance of the Arctic when organizing this year's ministerial meeting. As Dr. Miguel Rodrigues, a Foreign Service officer who served as the secretary's control officer put it, "The Ministerial set the tone for the next two years of U.S. leadership on Arctic issues, and for me, it was a rich and rewarding professional experience that revealed the reach of diplomacy far beyond world capitals to distant lands whose future matters to all of us."

Climate change is also an issue confronting the Arctic, which is warming twice as fast as the rest of the planet on average. Glaciers and sea ice are melting at an astonishing rate, causing sea levels to rise around the world.

Some scientists are predicting an ice-free summer in the Arctic Ocean by 2050. In Alaska, reduction of year-round Arctic sea ice that previously protected the coast from the eroding effects of waves and tides has now left some villages at risk of falling into the ocean. Permafrost, which is frozen soil found in much of the Arctic, stores massive amounts of carbon and threatens to exacerbate climate change on a planetary scale as it thaws.

Changes in the Arctic are creating new opportunities and paving the way for increased human activity, for instance, by opening new shipping lanes and offering improved access to resources. With these new activities, however, comes increased responsibility to ensure the region's environmental integrity and the safety of those who live, work and travel there.

In recognition of the need for the international community to work together in addressing both the challenges and opportunities arising in today's Arctic, the United States chose "One Arctic: Shared Opportunities, Challenges and Responsibilities" as its chairmanship theme. The three main priorities of the U.S. chairmanship are ensuring Arctic Ocean safety, security and stewardship; improving economic and living conditions; and addressing the impacts of climate change.

To guide engagement on the Arctic during this pivotal period, Secretary Kerry appointed Adm. Robert J. Papp, Jr. as the first U.S. special representative for the Arctic. A former commandant of the Coast Guard, Papp will work closely with Fran Ulmer, the secretary's special advisor on Arctic science and policy and chair of the U.S. Arctic Research Commission; Ambassador David Balton, the deputy assistant secretary for oceans and fisheries in the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES); and Julia Gourley, the United States' senior Arctic official, also from OES.

The Arctic states, Permanent Participants, and other key Council players, including official observers and Working Group representatives, meet at least twice per year at Senior Arctic Official (SAO) meetings to carry out the work of the Council. During the U.S. chairmanship, SAO meetings will take place in Alaska, Maine and Washington, D.C.

To coincide with the U.S. chairmanship, the Department is taking its Arctic engagement to a new level, domestically and abroad. New initiatives are being carried out in conjunction with posts in Arctic countries and across the world. Secretary Kerry will host a major international leadership conference this month in Anchorage, Alaska focusing on Arctic climate change. Also, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs recently launched the Fulbright Arctic Initiative, a new academic exchange program that will support a team of 17 scholars from all eight Arctic nations in carrying out collaborative, interdisciplinary research on issues related to energy, water, health and infrastructure in the Arctic.

As an Arctic nation, the United States has the responsibility to act as an advocate and steward for the region. Thanks to the U.S. chairmanship of the Arctic Council and the new initiatives, enthusiasm and partnerships it is spurring, we'll be able to do just that, even after the U.S. chairmanship ends in 2017. More information on the Department's Arctic work is available online and via Twitter: @USArcctic and #OneArctic. ■



Secretary of State John Kerry, left, and U.S. Special Representative for the Arctic Admiral Robert J. Papp, Jr. watch Byron Nicholai of Toksook Bay, Alaska, perform a song in a native Alaskan language at a May reception at the Department celebrating the beginning of the U.S. chairmanship of the Arctic Council. *State Department photo*



Coast Guard crewmembers retrieve a supply canister during a NASA-led arctic climate change study in the Beaufort Sea. *Photo by NASA/Kathryn Hansen*





# ADA Success

## Our Talented Employees with Disabilities

By Scott Duncan, lead program analyst, Disability/Reasonable Accommodations Division, and Ed Warner, deputy editor

**T**o celebrate this month's 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), an international organization on arts, education and disabilities donated a beautiful handmade quilt to the Art in Embassies Program, for display at U.S. missions overseas. The quilt consists of squares from each of the states, depicting contributions and achievements from people with disabilities and illustrating the benefits of inclusion in the workplace.

Within the Department, capturing the contributions of persons with disabilities would require a quilt with intricate stitching and an international flair, as our employees with disabilities are intertwined on a global scale in so many successful ways.

In recent years the Department has taken significant steps to foster inclusion and encourage increased hiring of people with disabilities while seeking to recognize individuals who may not have been previously known as employees working with disabilities. By recognizing the contributions from employees with disabilities, the Department has greatly increased its diversity and is better prepared to meet the full range of needs of the people we serve throughout the world.

The Disability/Reasonable Accommodations Division (DRAD) in the Bureau of Human Resources, launched in 2009, provides disabled employees with the adaptations that allow them to meet the essential functions of their job. These accommodations do not lessen the expectations that a person with a disability has to fulfill their duties, but serve as a set of tools to overcome obstacles, allowing employees to

fully share their talents and skills. Sometimes, these accommodations come in the form of assistive technology, such as computers with speech output for people who are blind or dictation software for people with typing dexterity conditions.

The Department also promotes Schedule A hiring, a hiring authority that promotes noncompetitive hiring of qualified persons with disabilities.

According to DRAD Director Patricia Pittarelli, the great value of the ADA for

the Department is that, through such efforts as Schedule A hiring and workplace accommodations, the Department gains the valuable inclusion of all people who positively contribute to our mission.

The Department also captions video. On this score, the Video Captioning Implementation (VCI) Project, championed by the under secretary for management and the director of the Office of Civil Rights, was launched in May. The project requires captioning of all new unclassified live



Sign language interpreter Jeffrey Bowden demonstrates American Sign Language for a youth at Take Your Child to Work Day 2015.

*Photo by Ed Warner*

# Celebrating 25 Years of the





and recorded video media. On the Video Captioning SharePoint site, users can request captioning, or review policies, information, FAQs and guidance. Questions can be addressed to [VideoCaptioning@state.gov](mailto:VideoCaptioning@state.gov).

The Department produces or uses 18,000 to 20,000 videos each year domestically and overseas in about 70 foreign languages, including training videos, video on demand on BNET, public diplomacy videos and videos from across functional and regional bureaus. In addition, there are videos produced for its social media platforms.

The Department also has an international impact on people with disabilities throughout the world. The Office of the Special Advisor for International Disability Rights collaborates with other nations to advocate for and promote disability rights. These efforts put the Department at the table where sweeping reforms can often be achieved.

To better understand the valuable contributions made by Department employees with disabilities, State Magazine spotlights the examples below, with their identities protected in accordance with medical information privacy.

One employee with progressive hearing loss said she has difficulty deciphering words without visual cues or perceiving where sounds are coming from. DRAD responded by providing a telephone that displays real-time captioning while she listens to a call. DRAD also provides, when requested, a certified Communications Access Real-time Translation provider, for captioning at events, streamed to a laptop.

“Since I work in the technology field, I am very accustomed to email communication and sitting at a computer all day long not needing assistance, but as I branch out in my career and attend more presentations and meetings, it is nice to know that I will be able to experience the event just as anyone else does,” she added.

A blind employee who provides IT support is another example. This employee uses a program that reads what’s on his computer



## Schedule A Program speeds hiring of those with disabilities

By Lana Hiland, selective placement coordinator, Disability and Reasonable Accommodations Division

**T**he Department of State has special programs, incentives and policies for recruiting and retaining employees with disabilities. Among these is noncompetitive hiring authority, also known as Schedule A(u). This allows a manager to hire someone with a disability on the spot, without competition or issuing a job announcement. Schedule A(u) applicants must still be able to perform the essential functions of the job, with or without accommodations, and are held to the same performance standards as other employees. When using Schedule A(u), a manager can expect to have an employee in a seat and on the job within 30 days of hiring, pending his or her clearance.

Hiring a person with a disability makes business sense. Since an estimated 15 percent of the world’s population consists of individuals with disabilities, a U.S. federal agency interacting with persons from around the world must have a diverse workplace to promote mutual respect among people with differences.

Schedule A(u), as discussed in the Code of Federal Regulations (5CFR 213.3102(u)), allows for the noncompetitive hiring of a person with a disability who has a Schedule A letter from a medical professional. The Americans with Disabilities Act defines a qualifying disability as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of the individual. To be Schedule A-eligible, the standard is different, and the applicant must be deemed to have an intellectual, psychiatric or severe physical disability.

Workplace diversity fosters respect among workplace colleagues who recognize that different people have unique strengths, increasing productivity and making the workplace stronger. Diversity also encourages creativity and ingenuity in thinking and in the use of assistive technology. For instance, well before cell phones converted speech to text, those with vision impairments were using that technology, just as text messaging, now so popular, was long a primary means of communication for individuals who are deaf.

For more information on Schedule A(u), contact the Disability and Reasonable Accommodations Division or email me at [SelectivePlacement@state.gov](mailto:SelectivePlacement@state.gov). ■

# Americans with Disabilities Act





## ADA's Champion Advisor promotes inclusive diplomacy

By Terry Tracy, senior policy advisor,  
Special Advisor for International Disability Rights

**T**he Department's effort to advance the rights of people with disabilities goes beyond Washington, D.C., and U.S. embassies abroad. Secretary of State John Kerry promotes disability rights as human rights in the concept of Disability-Inclusive Diplomacy, and Judy Heumann, the Special Advisor for International Disability Rights, incorporates it into the work of the Department.

As a leading activist for disability rights since the 1960s, Heumann advocated passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, now the gold standard for laws that protect, promote and advance the rights of persons with disabilities. Several countries, including the United Kingdom, Sweden and Japan, have used the ADA as a framework for their own legislation.

Since her June 2010 appointment as special advisor, Heumann has travelled the world to encourage governments and advocate for the rights of people with disabilities. She has promoted accessible transportation in Ethiopia, reasonable accommodations for the visually impaired in Mongolia and offered guidance on the creation of a national Paralympics training center in Brazil. Her work with the Chinese government led to the discovery of common priorities, such as the development of methods for inclusive education and employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

To mark ADA's 25th anniversary, the office of the special advisor encouraged embassies to celebrate the values that make the United States a leader in disability rights. Among the posts responding, the U.S. Embassy in Quito, Ecuador, is coordinating a team of amputee climbers from Ecuador and the United States. Their goal is to reach the summit of Mount Cotopaxi on July 26, the day the ADA was signed into law.

Disability rights are becoming a reality in the United States and are a key element of how American diplomacy defines American democracy to the world. ■



screen, with audio or Braille output, and has access to on-call support from a DRAD accommodations assistant, who can provide visual assistance during onsite technology consultations.

This employee says the factors that make him most successful are his enlightened co-workers: a supportive supervisor and a bureau where "nobody gives a second thought anymore" on learning he will handle their IT problem.

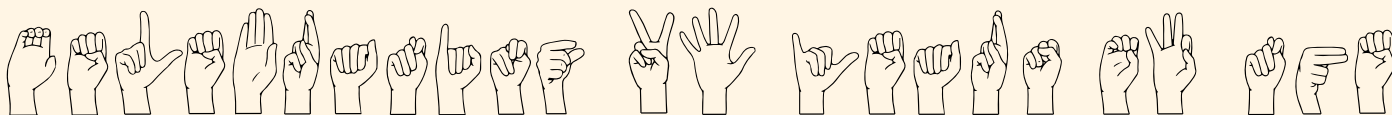
Among those with disabilities who are serving the Department overseas is an embassy information management specialist for whom American Sign Language (ASL) was his first language. This employee primarily communicates with a sign language interpreter.

At diplomatic events, he said having an ASL interpreter can be an icebreaker, leading to friendships with diplomatic peers, local staff and communities. "People will come up to me all the time and ask for specific signs or resources where they could learn more," he said.

When he speaks at local events, especially in nations where disability rights are not a priority, he finds "having an interpreter is kind of a two-fold attraction; what they see is not only how a deaf person can be successful, but also that in the U.S. we have the right to communicate ourselves in whichever way is comfortable."

He also promotes expanded opportunities. In one Southeast Asian city, for example, he worked with his interpreter, Jeffrey Bowden, to convince the management of the hotel where Bowden was staying to hire more disabled individuals. Those hired, "are, and remain, some of the top performing staff at that hotel, and by the time I was leaving post, other hotels in the region were starting to notice that," he said.

Supporting these employees are the staff of DRAD, including its team of American Sign Language interpreters. DRAD's interpreters are often the face of the organization, working at major events in Washington and posts throughout the world where some attendees have hearing limitations. Bowden, for instance, started at the Department







Steve Ramirez, president of the DOS employee affinity and advocacy organization, the Disability Action Group, speaks at the unveiling of the quilt commemorating the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disability Act that was made by VSA Tennessee (formerly known as Very Special Arts). *Photo by Erin Eddy*

## Disability Action Group lends a hand

By Steve Ramirez, evaluation program analyst, F/PPM, and Amanda Richard, visual information specialist, Bureau of Administration



Rajiv Shah, an employee of the Bureau of Public Affairs, greets a visitor to his office. Beside his keyboard is a device that translates text to Braille.

*Photo by Ed Warner*

The Disability Action Group (DAG), an employee affinity group, works to help make employees and their supervisors aware of the Department's commitment and obligations to persons with disabilities and to promote full and equal participation of people with disabilities within the Department of State.

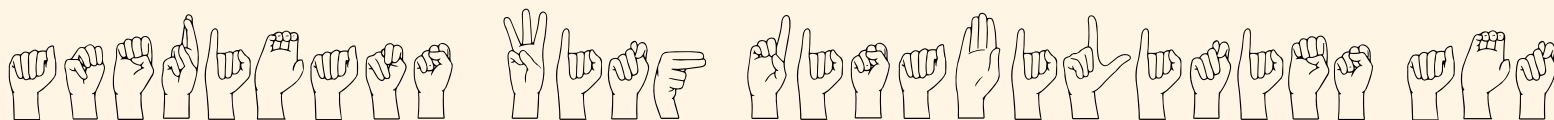
DAG is also a critical link between the Department's employee base and senior management, collaborating with staff of the Office of Civil Rights and Bureau of Human Resources. Under the leadership of a board of directors elected in December 2014, DAG has renewed its mission to ensure the Department enforces the rules and regulations that make the Department an inclusive and diverse agency, in hiring and providing accommodations for existing staff.

One of DAG's first actions of 2015 was to create an online presence to share information. The resulting SharePoint site serves members and all employees looking to learn more about the Department's disability resources. DAG also uses existing online platforms such as Corridor and email newsletters to communicate with members.

DAG is engaged in numerous ongoing activities, including working with the Office of the Senior Advisor on International Disability Rights on monthly events to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Other activities include a monthly lecture series, often held at the Bunche Library, a bimonthly newsletter, and DAG Council and committee meetings.

DAG membership has grown substantially in 2015, giving it a presence in 27 bureaus and offices. It has also advocated within the Department on such topics as reasonable accommodations, the Department's hiring of people with disabilities and general compliance with the Rehabilitation Act's Section 508, which requires federal electronic and information technology to be accessible to all.

In sum, DAG works from within to make the Department the best federal agency to work for—for all of its employees. More information about DAG is available on the group's SharePoint site or via email at [DAGCouncil@state.gov](mailto:DAGCouncil@state.gov). ■





During a panel discussion in honor of the ADA's 25th anniversary, Disability Action Group member Therese Tracy, center, makes a point as Foreign Service officers Mark G. Jackson, left, and Angie Bryan listen.

*Photo by Ed Warner*

in 1996, and right away was greeted by a deaf employee who walked him through the diplomatic passport application procedure.

Like many of the interpreters, Bowden spends much time on the road—an average of three trips a year (he's been to nearly every continent). When interpreting on a one-to-one basis, he says he develops an interpreter/client relationship that's more intense than that of day-to-day interpreting, since it involves "social interpreting, traveling together and meeting and greeting persons at post that may never have experienced

working with a deaf person and interpreter."

In addition to Art in Embassies accepting the quilt into its collection, celebration of the ADA anniversary has included a speaker series held by the Department's affinity group for employees with disabilities, the Disability Action Group (DAG). The series was supported by DRAD's sign language interpreters, and a video of it will be captioned for later viewing. The series featured persons with disabilities on the podium, including Howard Rosenblum, the chief executive officer

of the National Association of the Deaf.

However, the greatest achievement celebrating the ADA's anniversary, is the internal paradigm shift at the Department, where people with disabilities are now seen for their daily positive contributions and the greater level of inclusion in the valuable work they do.

Persons with a disability who would like more information on reasonable accommodations may contact the DRAD office at [reasonableaccommodations@state.gov](mailto:reasonableaccommodations@state.gov). ■

## DRAD Office provides employees with needed accommodations

By Eliza Bethune-King, disability analyst, Disability and Reasonable Accommodations Division

The Department's Disability/Reasonable Accommodations Division (DRAD), in Room H-622 of SA-1 (Columbia Plaza), makes reasonable workplace accommodations for employees and applicants with disabilities. These can include changing the work environment or the way things are done so that someone with a disability can apply for a job, perform it or enjoy equal access to benefits available to others in the workplace.

DRAD, led by Patricia Pittarelli, helps Department employees, supervisors and managers understand the accommodation process, and offers training, services and equipment. Accommodation requests can involve those for ongoing needs, such as for reading services for the blind or sign language interpretation for the deaf. They can also involve providing such specialized equipment as scooters and wheelchairs for employees and visitors with mobility impairments, and specialized computer software and solutions for those with light sensitivities.

DRAD will also brief those planning events that involve one or more persons with disabilities. Charles Kellett, an international visitor exchange specialist in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, said his team received such a briefing when planning a professional exchange for several IVLP participants with diverse disabilities.

"They explained a wide array of programming considerations, including appropriate methods to offer assistance to a blind participant and important considerations to reasonably accommodate wheelchair users," he recalled.

Examples of how DRAD has aided Department employees abound. For instance, one Department employee who is deaf uses sign language interpreting services from DRAD to work with colleagues and stakeholders. DRAD also provided her with a video teleconferencing unit connected to the Federal Video Relay Service, so she can make calls and be aware of visual-signaling devices and alarms.

DRAD enables employees to reach their full potential, using equipment or workplace flexibility. Those needing a job accommodation related to a disability should complete form DS-5053 and send it electronically to the [ReasonableAccommodations@state.gov](mailto:ReasonableAccommodations@state.gov) mailbox. ■



# Underwriting Success

## Grant fund promotes women's equality

By Chase Ballinger, program analyst, S/GWI

The Department of State promotes gender equality and advances the status of women and girls worldwide. In Guinea, where 97 percent of girls are exposed to female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), the Department supports a national dialogue and programs protecting 65,000 vulnerable girls and women. In Sri Lanka and Zambia, where female political participation is among the lowest in world, the Department is helping women leaders speak out, vote and stand for election. Also thanks to U.S. mission involvement, in Bolivia, radio stations are boosting their reporting on gender-based violence (GBV), and throughout Latin America female entrepreneurs now have increased access to low-cost, easy-to-implement technologies to grow their businesses.

The common denominator in these efforts is the secretary's Full Participation (FP) Fund. Launched in 2013, the FP Fund supports embassies' and bureaus' efforts to integrate gender equality in their work. "Political stability, peace and prosperity all require every one of us to do what we can to advance human rights for everyone, regardless of their gender, or ours," said Secretary of State John Kerry at the Fund's launch.

The FP Fund enables the Department to test innovative ways to tackle entrenched gender inequality, unlocking the potential of women and girls to lead healthy, safe and productive lives and contribute to greater economic growth and stronger societies. The FP Fund is managed by the Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI), which sends out requests for proposals twice a year. All posts, bureaus and

offices are eligible to apply. A senior Department of State panel—composed of experts from the Department's bureaus—decides which projects merit funding. Andrew Stevenson, who represents the Office of the Under Secretary for Political Affairs on the review panel, called the FP Fund "a unique mechanism to deepen collaboration among regional and functional bureaus within the Department, while also integrating the views of our posts in innovative and very direct ways."

To date, the FP Fund has underwritten 16 projects, representing diverse initiatives from embassies around the world and from bureaus and offices across the Department. Projects range from those promoting women's economic empowerment and participation in civic and political life to efforts preventing and responding to GBV or expanding women's and girls' access



Gathered at the Papua New Guinea 2015 Women's Forum in March are, from left, Embassy Port Moresby Economic Officer Susan May; Secretary for the Department of Religion, Youth, and Community Development Anna Solomon; the Papua New Guinea prime minister's wife, Lynda Babao-O'Neil; and ambassador to Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands Walter North.

*Department of State photo*

to technology. These projects are designed and implemented in coordination with other U.S. agencies, including USAID, the CDC and Peace Corps, as well as host governments, multilateral institutions and organizations from the private sector and civil society. The results—improved opportunities for women and girls, their communities and societies—advance prosperity, stability and peace around the world.

The next call for applications for the FP Fund will be released via an ALDAC this fall. More information is available on the fund's website or by emailing [FP\\_Fund@state.gov](mailto:FP_Fund@state.gov).

A Fund success story comes from Guinea and the fight against FGM/C. Although illegal in Guinea, FGM/C is prevalent and persists across ethnic and religious lines. The practice is often performed in poor sanitary conditions with crude and dirty instruments and often without anesthesia. Through partnerships with the host government, UNICEF, Guinea's first lady and 26 local civic and human rights organizations,

the U.S. Embassy in Conakry launched nationwide educational and media campaigns urging policymakers, health professionals, religious leaders, the public and those performing FGM/C to abandon the practice.

This campaign "is making Guinea stronger in its democratic trajectory," noted Melinda Crowley, the embassy's political and economic chief. "Democracy stands for free choice and not that of coercion represented by pervasive acts of gender-based violence. Change is occurring around FGM/C in Guinea and the gag order on this taboo topic is finally loosening."

Since the start of 2015, 265 of Guinea's villages and townships have voluntarily and publicly denounced FGM/C as part of the national campaign. Despite the prevalence and culturally engrained nature of FGM/C in the country, the campaign shows promise.

Elsewhere, the U.S. Embassy in Port Moresby has used FP Fund resources and its interagency Women's Empowerment Working Group to run a small-grants program in Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands mobilizing local women's groups, building coalitions and promoting women's economic empowerment to stop GBV. It has helped more than a dozen local NGOs start and expand such efforts.

The grants project has also allowed the embassy to continue its Women's Empowerment Speaker Series, which provides entrepreneurship and leadership training, and expand its public-private partnership with ExxonMobil, which provides basic business skills to survivors of GBV. The project also financed a second Women's Forum in Papua New Guinea, bringing together local NGOs, government representatives and international and private sector partners, and making gender issues a national concern.

In Benin, U.S. Embassy Cotonou and USAID are working together to reduce early and forced marriages, and expand services to survivors of GBV. The project advances the U.S. strategy to prevent and respond to GBV, and includes an awareness campaign on GBV's harmful effects. The recently launched project is also expanding the multiservice (medical, legal, psychosocial and economic support) GBV care centers in the country's regional hospitals. Several survivors of GBV who came to the care centers have since won courtroom victories against their perpetrators.

Another result of the FP Fund has been achieved by its grants to U.S. Embassies in Kampala, Uganda, and Tallinn, Estonia, where technology boot camps are promoting women's participation in start-up companies. ■



Pol/Econ section chief Melinda Crowley poses with the first lady of Guinea, Madame Condé, who is working to end female genital mutilation.

*Department of State photo*



# Finding Kim

## Embassy pulls man from stateless limbo

By Colleen Smith, consular officer, U.S. Embassy in Beijing

**T**he U.S. Embassy in Beijing recently established the U.S. citizenship of an American who had spent almost two decades in legal limbo, unable to hold a job or open a bank account. The move allowed him to leave China for New York to be with the mother he had not seen for more than 15 years.

In 1993, 7-year-old Korean-American Eugene Kim boarded a Beijing-bound plane with his father for a short business trip, leaving behind his mother, aunt, uncle and cousins in the United States. Kim's parents were separated, but his father promised his mother to bring him back at the conclusion of his business. After a few months of no contact, it became clear the child had been abducted. He lacked any documentation to prove his citizenship or even his identity: no passport, birth certificate or photos.

Despite this, the story he told some 16 years later, when he presented himself to the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, caused the post's American Citizens Services (ACS) and Fraud Prevention Unit (FPU) to start from scratch to find out whether Kim was in fact a U.S. citizen.

Details about Kim's childhood years were murky, but he knew his father had fled Beijing to escape creditors, but Kim was taken by them to live in a small village in northern China. There, he worked on a local farm in exchange for room and board—stranded and illegally residing in China. (Life without valid identification or legal status is harsh—Kim could not board a train, get a proper job, enroll in schools or seek medical treatment for almost 20 years.)

Although Kim grew up in China, he knew he was a U.S. citizen; his childhood memories included seeing his passport and meeting relatives in the United States—he even knew his family owned flower shops in New York. But he had no recollection of family members' full names or photos of himself as a child, or anything else to establish who he was, let alone his citizenship.

When he turned 23, Kim put his recollection of his citizenship to the test: He applied for a U.S. passport at U.S. Consulate General in Shenyang. But the lack of supporting evidence meant his case was never seriously pursued. After four years, he tried again, this time at Embassy Beijing, with a similar outcome.

Undeterred, Kim returned to the embassy again in April 2014, bringing with him a childhood friend who swore an affidavit affirming Kim's story—the first substantial evidence of his citizenship. He was told to report his passport (issued in 1993) to the Beijing police as lost, and did so, then came back two weeks later for a follow-up interview.

In his interview, Kim came across as a well-spoken young man with distinctively Korean features. ACS records showed two passports were issued to a person with the same name and date of birth, but the visual passport applications had to be pulled from the archives.

A local staff member and a consular officer interviewed Kim for more than an hour, gathering as many details as possible. All the while, Kim remained composed and sincere. While immigration fraud is rampant in China and tenuous claims are often baseless, the interviews concluded that Kim was either one of the best con artists ACS Beijing had ever seen—or his story, though far-fetched, might be true.

FPU's in-depth investigation of Kim's story determined that he was not a Chinese citizen and that the financial troubles his father's company had encountered, leading to his flight from creditors, were true. Then, the archived passport applications arrived, and the accompanying photos showed a clear physical resemblance.

But 20-year-old photos are not enough to adjudicate citizenship. The contact numbers listed on the applications were no longer in service, but investigators noted that the



Kim participates in Embassy Beijing's DNA collection process to establish his identity.

Photo by Colleen Smith

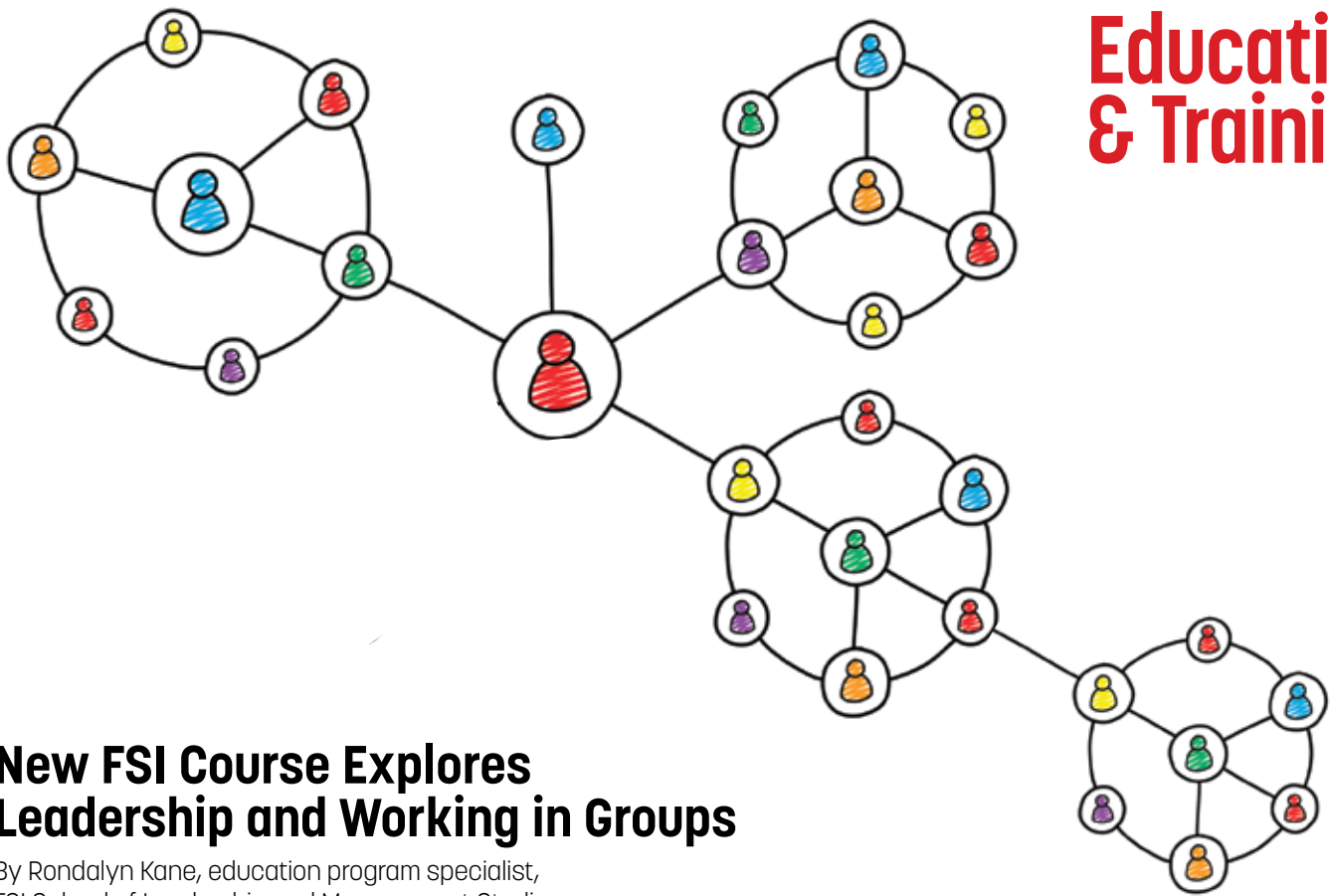
"Michelle" listed as an emergency contact was the same name he'd recalled during his interview. She was tracked down and was able to confirm that she had a cousin named Eugene who had gone missing many years ago. Michelle provided her mother's contact info, and her mother—possibly Kim's aunt—said she would try to contact Kim's mother, although she'd not heard from her brother (Eugene's father) in more than 20 years.

Michelle's mother reached out to the Korean-American community in New York and, two days later, a man who said he was Kim's uncle called ACS Beijing. He said his sister was Kim's mother, and that she was a U.S. citizen who was eager to hear more about her missing son. Contacted by the embassy, the mother agreed to a DNA test with Kim, and it came back a positive match.

With that evidence, ACS immediately approved the passport request, enabling Kim to begin re-establishing his legal identity after 20 years of being undocumented. He said he wanted to open a bank account, get a cell phone contract, travel and perhaps get married—all things he could not do before.

Shortly after, Kim's mother came to Beijing to see her only child, whom she'd not seen for more than 20 years. After several more months of clearing Chinese exit requirements, Kim left China and now lives with his mother in New York, reconnecting with family and his country of origin. ■





## New FSI Course Explores Leadership and Working in Groups

By Rondalyn Kane, education program specialist,  
FSI School of Leadership and Management Studies

I took the FSI course PT 137 and found myself fundamentally changed in ways that will mark my career.

Another student who took the course, Graham Lampa, was also changed. He said the course “stripped away the artificial trappings of bureaus and cones to understand how we work together as real people ... revealing issues of class, race, gender and other aspects of our identities that have an impact on how we all work together to advance the mission of diplomacy.”

This should not have been a surprise. The four-day course’s description states that Leadership and Authority in Groups is “unlike any other leadership course FSI has offered.” For instance, it uses no books flip charts or PowerPoint presentations and consists of just 45 students, three instructors—and many powerful learning experiences.

I am a leadership development instructor at FSI and have taught and taken courses on this subject for 14 years. I left PT137 with new insights about groups and their relationships with authority, the roles that people play in groups and the impact social identities have on the roles that we play and the experiences that we have in groups.

We all belong to groups. We live, work and socialize in them. Implicit in our membership is the presumption that the group helps us accomplish collectively what we cannot achieve independently. Whether we’re preparing 21st century diplomats for the future or developing foreign policy to counteract terrorism, our work in groups is more efficient and effective than our work done alone. The most successful leaders have strong understandings of group dynamics and skill at managing their diverse roles as leader and team member. At the same time, working in groups is not always efficient, effective or fun. In fact, working collectively can be frustrating, decidedly unproductive and more often than not the antithesis of fun. This course helped me to understand why.

The 45 students in the session I took were divided into three groups. The groups were each given a similar set of tasks that were designed to uncover the course’s core objectives. Those objectives are dealing with relationships to authority to achieve purpose, articulating group roles, addressing how issues of social identity (e.g., gender, race, socioeconomic background) affect

one’s perceptions of others or choices in the group and resolving inter- and intra-group disputes. During the course, students learned how aspects of one’s social identity set up expectations that don’t comport with how some group members view themselves. That contrast, and how we addressed those differences, provided me with insights and learnings that I now reflect upon daily.

The most powerful leadership tool that we possess is effective use of self. Rarely do we have an experience where we can examine an action as it is occurring and see ourselves as others see us. We can witness the impact that we have on others and the ways in which we can (and sometimes cannot) influence group decisions and actions. Such insight is a powerful leadership and life tool. If you are interested in exploring your influence and power in a dynamic group setting, this is the course for you.

The next session of Leadership and Authority in Groups (PT 137) runs from Sept. 28 to Oct. 1. For more information, call FSI’s Leadership and Management School at (703) 302-7194, or email Rebecca Dunham at [DunhamRJ@state.gov](mailto:DunhamRJ@state.gov). ■

# in brief...

## Embassy Majuro Tries Electric Car

Ambassador Thomas Armbruster explains to a group of Marshall Islands boys how the U.S. Embassy in Majuro's new electric car is fueled. When the director of the office of motor pools offered DCM Norman Barth the chance to have the post try the Ford C-MAX Energi Plug-in Hybrid electric car, Barth agreed, saying he wants the post to go green. Majuro—an atoll in the equatorial Pacific—is completely flat, has a 25-35 mph speed limit, less than 40 miles of roads and a year-round temperature in the 80s, making it ideal for EVs.

*Photo by Lois Shelden*



## Civil Rights Icon Addresses Gathering

After delivering the keynote speech at the Department's National African American History Month program, Congressman John Lewis, fourth from left, poses with, from left, Coordinator of the Bureau of International Information Programs Macon Phillips, Thursday Luncheon Group President Stacy D. Williams, Deputy Secretary Heather Higginbottom, Ambassador Ruth A. Davis and Andrew Aydin. Aydin is a policy advisor and the co-author, with Lewis, of the graphic novels "March: Book 1" and "March: Book 2," which recount the history of the 1965 Selma, Ala., civil rights march, in which Lewis participated.

*Photo by Michael Gross*

## Post Commemorates Curaçao's Gift

U.S. Consul General James Moore stands before Roosevelt House, the consul general's residence given to the United States by Curaçao in appreciation for U.S. protection during World War II. The facility, celebrating its 65th anniversary this year, is the site of a consulate-produced exhibit of archival photographs and information on the history of the Dutch Caribbean-U.S. relationship. CG Moore said U.S.-Dutch Caribbean ties "have endured, evolved and kept pace with the times; it is a shared history and rich heritage in which we can all take pride."

*Photo by Brett Russel*



## Embassy Celebrates Earth Day

Chargé d'Affaires Louis Mazel of the U.S. Embassy in Asmara commemorates Earth Day in April with children of the Sara Daycare Kindergarten, with whom he planted trees donated by the embassy. The embassy also held an Earth Day pottery exhibition, photo and poster display, and a quiz on environmental issues with Earth Day posters as prizes. More than 100 Eritreans joined embassy staff at the American Cultural Center.

*Photo by Debra Johnson*

## EFM Receives Documentary Award

Eligible Family Member Mihaela Biliowschi, executive assistant (media) in the Executive Office at the U.S. Embassy in Yaoundé, recently received the Silver World Medal at the 2015 International Television and Film Awards in the Best News Documentary/Special category. The award honored her former work as Washington, D.C., bureau chief for Romanian Antena 3 television, where her team produced a documentary about adoptees from Romania seeking to reconnect with their birth families. In Cameroon, Biliowschi, the wife of embassy officer Derrin R. Smith, conducts embassy outreach sessions and professional training for journalists, and does videography to support wildlife preservation.

*Photo by Derrin Smith*





## Robinson Addresses FSI Grads

Director of the Office of Civil Rights John M. Robinson, third from right at front, poses with graduates of FSI's 25th Civil Service Office Support Professionals Program (PK206) in May. The program helps employees become tech-savvy, knowledgeable managers who are also skilled communicators and team players. The next 14-week training begins in January, and more information is available from FSI's Office Management Training Division at 703-302-6923.

*Photo by Michael Morrison*



## Students Tour Former OSS Site

After touring the former headquarters of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the East Building that now houses the Office of Emergency Management across from Main State, students from Canton (Okla.) High School posed with Charles Pinck, far right, president of the OSS Society. The students chose OSS founder General William Donovan as their National History Day topic and won first place in their state competition. Their teacher said they "figured out that what the OSS did affects them in so many ways today," since it was the predecessor of the CIA.

*Photo by Robert H. Sanders*

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## FSI Celebrates NSELS Capstone Day

Participants and alumni of FSI's National Security Executive Leadership Seminar (NSELS) gather for the interagency seminar's third annual Capstone Day at FSI May 28. From left are Mike Albertson, Nicole Gibson, Donna Phelan, Jan Benini, Maria Olson, Christine Martin and Jennie Gromoll, participating in a networking exercise. Graduates from 16 different U.S. agencies spent the day discussing national security issues, including resiliency, strategic planning and increasing interagency detail opportunities.

*Photo by Michael Morrison*



## DG Presents HR Awards

Director General Arnold Chacon poses with this year's award winners from the Bureau of Human Resources. They included these Superior Honor Award winners: John K. Naland of the Office of Retirement, M. Colleen Bonar in the Office of Civil Service Human Resource Management, Judy Ikels and Elizabeth Sewall in Employee Relations, Kathryn Nutt Skipper in Grievance, Steven Burbuck in Presidential Appointments and Patricia McCabe and Tracy Whittington in Policy Coordination.

*Photo by Mark Stewart*

## Retirements

### Civil Service

Antrobus, Randolph C.  
Arciello, Ernest J.  
Aslett, Zan Douglas  
Beardall, William C.  
Bednarz, Jacquelyn A.  
Benjoar, Maurice  
Bergamo, Valerie Anne  
Bradley-Lamar, Betty J.  
Bradshaw, Stephen M.  
Calhoun, Shirley  
Chandler, Tony L.  
Cherry, Renee  
Chung, Won Y.  
Clark, Janice Eastman  
Covington, Charles B.  
Deu, Beant S.  
Easley, Cheryl D.  
Estacio, Benedicta S.  
Estes, Marlene C.  
Felder, Wendy J.  
Ferguson, Thomas L.  
Flowers, Marshall  
Fuster, Jose Maria Ortells

Fyke, Cheri  
Fyke, Edgar Louis  
Garvin, Emma  
Grasso, Thomas M.  
Hata, Marianne Jutta  
Henderson, John A.  
Holdforth, James E.  
Ison, Jeannette R.  
Jacobson, Linda  
Johnson, Brenda I.  
Johnson, Camero C.  
Jones, Richard Joseph  
Keeton, Edward David  
Kenworthy, Sue P.  
Kibler, Veronica A.  
Kratly, Alexander M.  
Krishnan, Ganapathisub  
Kuehne, Arthur P.  
La Covey, Cynthia B.  
Legania, Debra Lynn  
Lundy, Harry Eugene  
Makle-Williams, Iris  
Martino, Carmella  
McCubbin, Dorothy R.

Meng, Zong  
Mokhtar, Nadia  
Munger, Roger D.  
Nelson, Susan Hobbs  
Peavey, Sharon M.  
Piotroski, Stanley S.  
Powell, Jeannie  
Ray, Amal  
Reichert, Jack Leevie  
Rennie, Jemma Lelia  
Retzlaff, Barbara A.  
Rhoades, Sherri D.  
Rhodes, Douglas Jeffrey  
Robinson, Marie H.  
Rosenfeld, Steven H.  
Sheppard, Anne M.  
Smith, Ivette R.  
Treadwell II, Bertrand C.  
White, Angela E.  
Zlater, Denise G.

### Foreign Service

Aliprandi, David J.  
Avery, David  
Berg, Lora  
Blank, Ann-Catherine Gabriella

Brogden, Pamela D.  
Brown, Sue Kathrine  
Brudvig, Lee A.  
Cassidy, Joseph P.  
Chatelain, Timmie Thomas  
Childs, Anita S.  
Eaton, Charles Lytton  
Edelman, Scott David  
Ensslin, Barbara I.  
Ensslin, Robert Frank  
Fernandez, Alberto M.  
Fitzsimmons, Richard Stewart  
Foynes, Melissa Claire  
Francia, Sarah J.  
Gallant, Robert J.  
Gould, Laura M.  
Green, William S.  
Harris, Judy L.  
Harvey, John James  
Haugh, William J.  
Hilton, Olivia P. L.  
Hipp, Mark Jeffrey  
Hopson, Reginald E.  
Hunter, Kenan H.  
Huot, Gregory M.  
Hurley, Michael J.  
Hutchinson, Vicki E.

Johannsen, Richard  
Johnston, James Jason  
Larochelle, Keith R.  
Ledesma, Teresa  
Lee, Edward Alex  
Lizzi, Bruce J.  
Maurantonio, Pauline E.  
Olsen, Marlene E.  
Olsson, Kurt E.  
Patterson, Richard K.  
Penhune, Sarah Slipp  
Peterson, Keith  
Rooney, Matthew Morrow  
Schaaf, Jennifer S.  
Schirduan, Paul H.  
Schwenk, Jeffrey C.  
Seckler, David W.  
Sim, Cheryl Jane  
Simas, Timothy J.  
Slater, Charles J.  
Stevens, Larry S.  
Strohmeyer, Virgil B.  
Whalen, James F.  
Whittlesey, Cynthia Lee  
Williams, Hugh Floyd  
Zvinakis, Anh T.

## Ethics Answers

**Q:** I am so excited that someone from my hometown has announced he's running for the U.S. Senate in 2016. I know I may not use my title, email or any Department property to support this Senate hopeful. However, I would like to help him get a running start. May I, in my completely nongovernmental, personal capacity, organize fundraisers for him? I would not use any Department resources or contact any Department contacts. I am an FSO-1 and am not serving abroad.

**A:** Department employees may not solicit, accept or receive contributions for a candidate in a partisan political election, a political party or a partisan political group. This means you can't host a fundraiser or serve as a point of contact for one. However, you may be involved in other organizational aspects of a fundraiser, such as stuffing envelopes, setting up tables, selecting the menu or hiring entertainment. But you must be careful not to solicit, accept or receive any contributions. Employees serving abroad or on TDY tours, career employees in the Senior Executive Service, and presidential and political appointees are subject to additional restrictions. More detailed guidance for various types of employees is on our office's intranet site.

Ethics Answers presents hypothetical ethical scenarios Department employees might face. For help with real ethics questions, email [ethicsattorneymailbox@state.gov](mailto:ethicsattorneymailbox@state.gov).







# Appointments

**S. Fitzgerald Haney**  
U.S. Ambassador to  
Costa Rica



**Charles C. Adams, Jr.**  
U.S. Ambassador to  
Finland



**Charles C. Adams, Jr.** of Maryland is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Finland. An international attorney, he previously was senior counsel and managing partner in the Geneva, Switzerland office of Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, LLP. Before that, also in Geneva, he was managing partner in the law offices of Hogan & Hartson and Winston & Strawn. He is a member of the Virginia and District of Columbia bar associations. He served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Kenya from 1968 to 1970. He speaks French, German and Swahili.

**Gregory T. Delawie** (SFS) of Virginia is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Kosovo. Most recently, he was deputy assistant secretary for verification, planning and European security in the Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance. In previous positions he served as DCM in Berlin, deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs and DCM in Zagreb. In other Washington assignments he worked on bilateral trade issues, human resources policy, aviation security, as desk officer for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and as watch officer in the operations Center.

**Paul A. Folmsbee** (SFS) of Oklahoma is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Mali. He most recently served as executive director in the Bureau of African Affairs. Previously, he was the senior civilian representative for Regional Command East in Bagram, Afghanistan; consul general, Mumbai; provincial reconstruction team leader, Sadr City/Adhamiya, Iraq and director of the Office of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, Islamabad. His other overseas postings include Port-au-Prince, Dar es Salaam, La Paz, Colombo, Libreville, Nairobi and Geneva.

**Paul A. Folmsbee**  
U.S. Ambassador  
to Mali




**S. Fitzgerald Haney** of New Jersey is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Costa Rica. Previously, he was a principal and director of business development and client services at Pzena Investment Management. Before that, he served as senior vice president of ethnic consumer products at International Discount Telecommunications (IDT), director of strategic planning at Depository Trust and Clearing Corporation, senior associate at Israel Seed Partners in Jerusalem, and vice president of marketing and strategic planning at Citibank in Mexico City and Monterrey. He held various positions in marketing with PepsiCo in Mexico, Brazil and Puerto Rico.







**Julieta Valls Noyes**  
U.S. Ambassador  
to Croatia




**Gregory T. Delawie**  
U.S. Ambassador  
to Kosovo



**Ian C. Kelly**  
U.S. Ambassador  
to Georgia



**Mary Catherine  
"Molly" Phee**  
U.S. Ambassador  
to South Sudan



**Ian C. Kelly** (SFS) of Illinois is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Georgia. He previously served as Diplomat in Residence at the University of Illinois in Chicago. He also served as ambassador to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Vienna; spokesperson of the Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs; and office director in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. His other postings include Brussels (USNATO), Rome, Ankara, Vienna, Belgrade, Moscow, Leningrad and Milan. Before joining the Foreign Service, he was resident director for the Council on International Education Exchanges' Russian Language Program in Leningrad.

**Julieta Valls Noyes** (SFS) of Virginia is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Croatia. Most recently, she served as deputy assistant secretary, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. Before that, she was deputy executive secretary; DCM to the Holy See; deputy director of the Operations Center; director of the Office of Multilateral and Global Affairs, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor; deputy director, Office of Policy Planning and Coordination, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs; and desk officer for Greece. Her overseas postings include Panama City, Madrid, Mexico City, Guatemala City and Ciudad Juárez.

**Mary Catherine "Molly" Phee** (SFS) of Illinois is the new U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of South Sudan. She most recently served as chief of staff in the Office of the Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan. Previously, she was DCM, Addis Ababa; director for Iraq, National Security Council; and deputy security Council coordinator, USUN New York. Her overseas postings include Iraq, Kuwait City, Cairo and Amman. Before joining the Foreign Service, she was a deputy press secretary to U.S. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan.



# Obituaries



**Maggie Ahern**, 65, a retired Civil Service employee, died April 26 of heart failure. Her 40-year career included work as unit manager in TV production at USIA and in contracts and grants for the Fulbright program at both USIA and the Department. After retiring in 2009, she and her

husband moved to Deep Creek Lake in western Maryland, where she volunteered with the American Cancer Society, the Special Olympics (skiing coach and board member), the Garrett County Democrats and the Mt. Laurel Garden Club. She thoroughly enjoyed life on the lake with husband Mike and their dog, Rica.



**John Sinclair Brims**, 81, a retired FSO, died April 15 of complications from Alzheimer's disease in Brisbane, Australia. He joined the Department in 1962 and served in Sweden, Italy, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Ghana and Bangladesh. He was consul general in Lahore in 1979 when militants overran

the embassy in Islamabad. Retiring in 1999, he moved to Australia and continued to serve as an inspector for the Department. He loved to write and joined a writers group in Brisbane, where his short stories were published. An avid runner, walker, biker and swimmer, Brims and his wife enjoyed attending operas around the world.



**John "Jack" Stoddard Connolly, Jr.**, 87, a retired FSO, died Feb. 3, in Springfield, Va., of complications following heart surgery. He served in the Army in occupied Japan and joined the Department in 1949. His postings included Malaysia, Singapore, Laos, Belgium and Hong Kong. After

retiring in 1978, he helped found the American Institute in Taiwan and consulted for the Department, another 30 years. His passions were for sailing, hailing back to his job as cabin boy aboard the schooner Effie M. Morrissey, and the Foreign Service. Even in his last days at the hospital, he was attempting to recruit nurses for the Service.



**Mary Lee Deerfield**, 78, wife of retired FSO Eddie Deerfield, died Oct. 23, 2014, in Palm Harbor, Fla. She accompanied her husband to posts in India, Pakistan, Malawi, Canada, Uganda and Nigeria. She was active in social welfare in each country and often invited as a guest speaker at fundraisers and

other events. In Calcutta, she befriended Mother Teresa and assisted her Missionaries of Charity. In Kampala, she received a Departmental award for outstanding service as headmistress of the Lincoln International School. After retirement in 1991, she enjoyed gardening and a stint as president of the Palm Harbor Garden Club.



**James A. Derrick**, 67, a retired FSO, died at home in Alexandria, Va., from cancer. He served in the Army in Germany and worked for the Department of Commerce before joining State in 1975. He was a management officer in Hong

Kong, Djibouti, Pakistan, Mexico, Cambodia and in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, handling many posts' emergency evacuations. As chargé in Samoa, he facilitated the return to their families of 28 abused and neglected American teenagers, who were at a camp for troubled youth. He later worked for the International Executive Service Corps as an instructor in South Sudan.



**Francois M. Dickman**, 90, a retired FSO, died April 12 in Laramie, Wyo. He served in the Army in World War II and the Korean War before joining the Department in 1951. He was posted to Colombia, Lebanon, Sudan, Tunisia and Saudi

Arabia. In 1976, he became ambassador to the United Arab Emirates and then was ambassador to Kuwait. Retiring in 1985, he and his wife returned to their hometown of Laramie, where he taught political science at the University of Wyoming. His career was documented for the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training's Foreign Affairs Oral History Project.



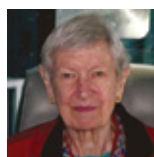
**Ollie Benjamin Jefferson Ellison**, 88, a retired FSO, died May 26 at his Maryland home from natural causes. He served in the Army during the Korean War. Among the first African-Americans in the Foreign Service, Ellison had a career at State that spanned from 1957 until 1989.

Assignments abroad included Cairo, Bremen, Kinshasa, Bangkok, Bangui and Geneva. In retirement, he worked at the National Archives' declassification department. His career was featured in State Magazine (February 2013). He enjoyed classical and operatic music, travel, the mastery of the German language, cooking, reading and the company of family and friends.



**Harry J. Gilmore**, 77, a retired FSO, died April 23 of a heart attack near his home in Dumfries, Va. His 36-year career included posts in Russia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Turkey and Germany where, in November 1989, he helped ensure that

East-West checkpoints remained calm as the Berlin Wall fell. In Armenia in 1993, as the first U.S. ambassador to that ex-Soviet nation, he oversaw massive aid and relief efforts. After retirement in 1997, he served as a dean at FSI. An accomplished pianist, he would often accompany his wife, a professional singer.



**Joanna Harbison**, 89, a retired Foreign Service secretary, died April 28 in Overland Park, Kan. She worked for the Department for more than 30 years, at posts in Seoul, Moscow, Athens, Nairobi, Manila, Djakarta, Tel Aviv, Cape Town, Beijing, Tokyo and Prague. In retirement, she resided in

San Diego before moving back to her home state of Kansas.



**George F. Jones**, 79, a retired FSO, died April 20 in Fairfax, Va. of a heart attack. A specialist in Latin American affairs, he served as ambassador to Guyana from 1992-95. His other posts included Ecuador, Ghana, Venezuela, Guatemala, Chile and Costa Rica, plus assignments to the U.N. General

Assembly in New York and the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna. After retiring in 1995, he was active in support of democratic election processes and election observation throughout Latin America and served on the governing board of the American Foreign Service Association.





**Malcolm Lawrence**, 89, a retired FSO, died June 1 in Chevy Chase, Md. A native Washingtonian, he served in the Air Force during World War II and flew 23 combat missions over Europe. His 30-year career as an economic officer included postings to England and Switzerland. Among

his many Washington, D.C., assignments, he was trade promotion specialist on loan to the Department of Commerce. Outside of work, he was a professional drummer, school builder, civic activist, education consultant, freelance writer, poet and radio commentator.



**Thomas "Tom" Meredith**, 64, husband of retired office management specialist Vicki Meredith, died Feb. 6 at their home in Livingston, Mont., from primary progressive multiple sclerosis. As a Navy Seabee, Tom volunteered to go to Moscow following an embassy fire

in 1977, where he and Vicki met. They served together in Tunis, Abidjan, Bangkok, Kinshasa, Islamabad, Taipei, Singapore, Seoul, Kuala Lumpur and Hong Kong, where he held various positions as an EFM, including 15 years of consular work. He enjoyed running, hiking, swimming, softball and World War II history. They retired in 2013.



**Leonardo "Nard" Neher**, 92, a retired FSO, died May 11 in Washington, D.C. He served in the Army during World War II before joining the Department. His overseas posts included Turkey, Morocco, Vietnam, Syria, Congo, Chad, Dominican Republic and Burkina Faso. In

each country, he and his wife enjoyed visiting every place of note. Along the way, he taught himself French, Spanish, Italian, Turkish, Arabic, Swahili and Lingala. In retirement in Washington, he devoted himself to feeding the homeless.



**Elizabeth Brown Pryor**, 64, a retired FSO, died April 13 in a car accident near her home in Richmond, Va. She was the author of prize-winning books on Clara Barton and Robert E. Lee, and had just finished a book on President Lincoln. As a diplomat from 1983–2006, she

served in Madrid, Pretoria, Vienna and Sarajevo, and as a spokesperson for the U.S. Mission to NATO in Brussels. In Washington, she worked to implement the Dayton Accords that helped end the Balkans conflict. She is remembered fondly, and sorely missed, by friends around the world.



**Dominick Ramirez**, 80, a retired FSO, died Oct. 30, 2014, in Philadelphia, Pa. He joined the Department in 1959 and served in Bangkok, Jakarta, Amman, Calcutta, Hong Kong, Bonn, Yaoundé, Rangoon, Colombo, Sydney and Paramaribo. After retirement in 1991, he joined

his wife Louise, a Foreign Service office management specialist, on assignments to Seoul, Niamey, Phnom Penh, Jakarta, Vientiane, Rangoon, Dili and Taipei, after which she retired, and he returned to the United States to live with his son.



**Karla Reed**, 73, a retired FSO, died Sept. 13, 2014 in Durham, N.C., from cancer. She joined USIA in 1974, served in Lebanon, and then worked as a consular officer in Kuwait, Laos, Cambodia, Trinidad and Tobago and Saudi Arabia, where she was consul general in Riyadh. After retiring in 1994, she devoted

herself to construction and renovation projects in North Carolina, building stage sets for local theaters in Chapel Hill and volunteering at Habitat for Humanity and the N.C. Botanical Garden. She loved gardening, Japanese embroidery, tennis, eco-travel and pursuing her studies at Duke University's Learning in Retirement program.



**Walter Byron Rice**, 79, a retired FSO with the Department of Agriculture, died March 21 in Tuxtla, Mexico, where he resided. He was a Peace Corps volunteer and worked for the World Health Organization before joining Agriculture in 1980. He worked on screw worm eradication projects in Latin

America and fell in love with Mexico, where he built his retirement home. He and his wife enjoyed travel to foreign countries, with Egypt and Thailand among their favorite places.



**Cecil S. "Cy" Richardson**, 88, a retired FSO, died April 1 in hospice care in Virginia. He served in the Air Force during WWII and the Korean War. In 1956, he joined the Department. His postings included Dakar, Saigon, Lagos, Paris, Accra, Brussels, Quito, Lima and Nassau. He served in Tehran during

the time between the exile of the Shah and the storming of the U.S. embassy. After retiring in 1991, he and his wife traveled widely and participated enthusiastically in the cultural scene of the Washington, D.C., area.



**William C. Taylor**, 95, a retired FSO, died Feb. 8 in Lancaster, Pa. He served in the Army during WWII and was involved in six major battles in North Africa and Europe. He then held several U.S. government positions before joining the Department in 1951. His postings included Manila, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, Teheran, Quito and Saigon during the Vietnam War. He made his home in Washington, D.C., after retiring in 1970.



**Harold B. Wardman**, 67, a retired FSO, died May 3 in Phoenix, Ariz. A Vietnam veteran, he served two tours in the Air Force. He worked as an air traffic controller in the United States, Thailand and Saudi Arabia before joining the Department in 1978. He was posted to Beirut, Amman, Addis Ababa and

Abu Dhabi, and retired in 1998. He enjoyed traveling and crossing off bucket-list destinations; his latest (in February) was the Honduran island of Roatan. During retirement, he volunteered at the Carl T. Hayden VA Medical Center in Phoenix.

*Questions concerning employee deaths should be directed to the Office of Casualty Assistance at (202) 736-4302. Inquiries concerning deaths of retired employees should be directed to the Office of Retirement at (202) 261-8960. For specific questions on submitting an obituary, please contact Michael Hahn at hahnmg@state.gov or (202) 663-2230.*



Marshall Islands



Czech Republic



# End State

## Marshall Islands Pg. 8



Children laugh as they play a game under the shade of their beachside home in Majuro.

*Photo by Stefan Lins*

## Czech Republic Pg. 4



Tourists and residents mill around a plaza lined with shops and restaurants in Old Town Square, Prague.

*Photo by Olga*

## Cambodia Pg. 21



A Buddhist monk in saffron robes walks past stone statues standing guard on along the perimeter of a temple.

*Photo by David Dennis*

Cambodia







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